

POLICING BAY STREET

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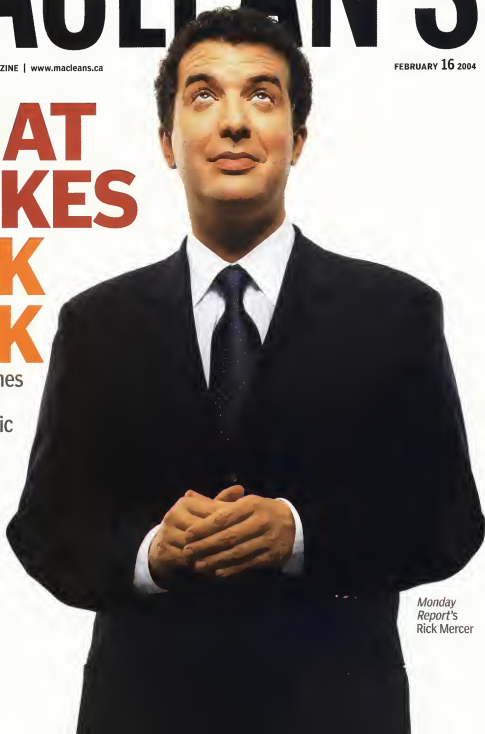
CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | www.macleans.ca

FEBRUARY 16 2004

WHAT MAKES RICK TICK

Behind the scenes
with Canada's
hottest TV comic

BY JONATHON
GATEHOUSE



*Monday
Report's*
Rick Mercer

\$4.95

07



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MAKING FUN OF THE NEWS

People increasingly get their news from comedy shows. What does that tell us?

HE'S DONE lots of fun, funny stuff over the years, but my favourite Black Mercer television death remains the time, six years ago, that he took Jon Owens to a Harvey's hamburger joint for lunch. The premise, if you haven't seen it, is that Mercer is interviewing the then-TVA showbiz highlifter of his career, Christie, who has terrific on-air timing, is now poor in his role as a straight man. He remains in character during a debate about his previous

positions in cabinet, while Mercer grows progressively more desperate in his bore-down and tries, in various ways, to bring the session to a swift close. He fails, and by the end, with credits rolling, Mercer is flopped backward in his seat, eyes rolling toward the ceiling, while Christie drowses, seemingly fascinated by his own life achievements.

The skit rereads on several levels. Any one who has ever sat through a self-satisfied, self-serving discourse by some aging bourgeois, academic or political type (and who among us has escaped that final) has longed to behave as Mercer does. The ability with which he lampoons that behaviour has earned Mercer, the subject of our cover profile (page 38) by Jonathan Gershon, recognition as Canada's leading political satirist. Anyone who watches television news recognizes the dramatic on-sets in use in interviews and interviews are presented in casual, relaxed fashion—just two people having a chat, as if there were no camera and sound crew on hand monitoring every word, or worried audience of hundreds of thousands of people. By dragging to the camera, and staring the audience to share his point, Mercer breaks down the artificial wall between performer and viewer.

There's nothing new about the concept of television shows built around amusing news events, newsmakers—or the way news is presented. *The Hour Has Seven Days*, the Canadian go-to newsbreaker, first showed up on the CBC in 1964. What's changed is that those wars are now arguably more influential than many of the shows they mock. Even as ratings for evening news programs have been dropping for years, the number of shows that satirize or play off news is going up. Consider *The Hour Has 22 Minutes*, *The Newsroom*, *Royal Canadian Air Force*, and

“which quality matters most—in information or entertainment? That's increasingly a difficult job for journalists.”

Merger's Monday for *paranoid Canada*, or *The Daily Show* with Joe Stewart, and *Owen & Moore* in the United States. And various studies have shown that young people rely on late night comedy shows for a large portion of their news.

That's not as surprising—or silly—as it first seems. Smart, hip interviewers like Mercer and Stewart often pose innocent and unprejudiced questions that traditional journalists wouldn't ask—they force newsmakers to respond quickly in a way that gives more insight into their personalities. The essence of good comedy is the speed with which it cuts to the chase—as the result is a personal summary of events aimed at reflecting the public mindset. And news today is increasingly commodified who delivers—and the manner in which they do so—crates as much or more than the information itself. Mercer and Stewart inform even as they entertain. What of those great journalists' rants? Like it or not, it's become a tougher question for journalists to answer as consumers feel seduced by information overload. Welcome, in that, to the post-news era.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

emerson@maclean.ca or emerson@theeditor.ca

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OWNERS: JAMES H. HANCOCK & CO.

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Anthony Wilson-Smith

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'If this idea of not informing students of their proficiency is carried into the workplace, they will be confused when issued pink slips, one after another.' —Neil Gilligan, Quakertown, Pa.



Who creates more problems in the justice system? Cops, lawyers, judges or politicians?

Firing back

Cops, like everyone else, are subject to human frailties ("Under the gun," *Crimo*, Feb. 2) but how about the politicians who benefit from criminal practices? Let's send out the judges who take bribes. Let's weed out the lawyers who purposefully slow up the court system, allowing criminals to go free. And, sure, let's go after the crooked cops, but let's not start at the bottom of the food chain.

Joseph Luccombe, Phoenix, Ariz.

As a serving constable of an Ontario police service, I am very proud of my profession. I consider that police must have a professional standard to follow, but how much broader accountability does lawyer Peter Bors want to run down the police service without even acknowledging its effectiveness in protecting the public? Perhaps the accountability he proposes would be better undertaken by the lawyers, the judges and bodies such as the Special Investigations Unit. Compelling them to scrutinize their practices and justify their decisions—in police regularly do—would bring balance to the justice system. *Jim McMillan, Newick, Ont.*

How ironic is the blue wall of silence, when time and again on the news we hear police

complaining of witnesses not coming forward to volunteer information? Perhaps our officers should lead by example. *Scott Jackson, Calgary, Ont.*

While your national affairs writer Charlie Gillingham's informative picture of policing issues, the same cannot be said of Carleton University professor Barry Leighton, who is quoted as claiming "there are probably more lawyers digging away their clients' trust accounts than there are police digging into money paid to agents." As a lawyer, I object to this cheap shot. Prof. Leighton is right that this type of shift in common sense has profound importance. *Chrisna must be*

Juicy debate: Are we sacrificing children's health for dollars?

Barbette Kline's discussion from "Portage to Pelly, Alta., worries that soft-drink soft drinks with 'juicy' in school vending machines" (*Soft drinks*, "Up Front," Jan. 22) takes a lot more space than soft drinks and soft-drink-related topics. For one, can kids have more sugar than Coke, "the all-american" soft drink? This vending machine is a good source of school issues.

able to train their legal counsel, and then of the nature usually undermine such trust. *My Joseph, Toronto*

Funny thing, democracy

I'm going to say bluntly what everyone else is rap dancing around ("Stanning for all they're worth," *Politics*, Feb. 2). Belinda Stenrich is 37 years old, has no university degree, has no previous reputation for ideas and simply took over the company created and built by her father. She is not a veteran executive who ascended the corporate ladder and has years of practical experience. She is a dilettante of the highest order, and no amount of edgy campaign strategy will be able to make that. Her involvement in an issue to corner politicians who have devoted their lives to serving the public: I'll hand a million dollars, I would short her back.

Wayne Posen, Calgary

A capital offence

How was it possible that Canada's fourth largest city was ignored in your cover story on our major metropolitan areas ("How to make our cities work," *Cover*, Jan. 19)? References to Ottawa were only to the federal government. Our capital city embraces a great deal more than just the seat of government. It is one of the country's most beautiful, vibrant and livable cities.

Card Atkinson, Nepean, Ont.

Do not think it is a shortage of funds that impairs our cities but rather mismanagement. City officials, with all due respect, need help managing those huge budgets—they need financial tools, expertise and sometimes audits to ensure ends meet. All Canadians do it on a day-to-day basis—I will not spend more than my income, and when I spend, I prioritize. Why does government—federal, provincial and municipal—ignore the fact that we taxpayers also have limited resources and cannot finance shelter? When will they realize that being entrusted with our hard-earned money, they have a responsibility to maximize our benefits, not their expenditures? *Nancy Thomas, Windsor, Ont.*

Faux food

It took new obesity and diabetes figures, two bad Canada coasts, Chinese over cats, American chicken and a fish trade to get our attention that something is terribly wrong



IBM Business Consulting Services article: *How to make our cities work*

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with our food system," limited food," *Cont.*, Jan. 26) Thank you for helping more North Americans become local, organic and choosy. I look forward to a time when I walk into the high school where I teach, and I can't pick a Big Gulp or a Big of Skittles anywhere. *Elaine Campbell-Lawrence, Golden, Ont.*

Anyone alarmed by media reports of health concerns with our food supply needs to start questioning their priorities and choices. Perhaps a realistic and important step is a larger portion of income on food, just as more money is found to spend on such staples as the costs of gas, insurance and the vehicles themselves climb. It is consumers who will ultimately decide whether or not our food supply is safe and reasonable. *Kim McMillan, Glenora, B.C.*

After recent beef and salmon scares, I was preaching the virtues of vegetarianism when my teenage daughter interrupted me with, "What about genetic foods, Dad?" "Yes, what do we eat without risking something that may show up a few years from now?" *Sandra Dale, Calgary*

Why geography class matters
In regards to the story published in your Feb. 2 issue, "John Trini starts a business... Just Harcourt's first step in it," it should be noted that Antenna is located in New Brunswick, not New Brunswick. And since it is the New Brunswick/New Brunswick border and its proximity across you will find the border, NB I just thought you might want to know in case you ever need a map. *Hal, Ontario*
Richard Brown, Toronto

The true toll of logging
As the wife of a logger, I felt my throat tight as I read your article "Blind in the woods," *British Columbia*, Jan. 29—the same feeling I got every time I received a quote from a resident that had occurred and a helicopter was on its way in. My anxiety isn't so immediate now. My husband, like numerous others, got no longer work in the same community as which he lives because access to harvestable timber is so restricted. Depending on the distance from their home to the nearest and the remoteness of where they



Two red cows received attention on food.

go—they can be absent from their families for days, weeks or, in extreme months, they might not be around or logging's social impact on its communities by way of alcoholism, divorce and the effects of absentee fathers. The danger too, though, is its fact by isn't only physical. *Alison Gibson, Surrey, B.C.*

A good story, but one thing is missing—from stump to mill, all is based on production performance. The big corporate mills set the price for the woods delivered. These prices are so low that the contractor responsible for delivery to the mill has to work long hours in order to make a living. Safety is compromised and responsibility for accidents lies with the contractor. *Frank Lawrence, New Brunswick*

Grading students
Society wishes to have students at all levels receive a good education. Society also wishes, and needs, a method of assessment that shows the level of achievement students have reached. ("How graded our kids," *Cont.*, Jan. 12) There is nothing contradictory about these two premises. The challenge has always been to have teachers who understand the two premises and who are able to give the students and society what is needed. *Frank Bennett, New Brunswick*

I am sure many readers have also had the following question or have perhaps asked them their school during their school year:

"Will this be in the exam?" or "Do we need to know this for the test?" I consistently received good grades in school because I was able to cram and regurgitate, but whether I really understood what was being taught to me is another story. *Donald Robert, Doris, Saskatchewan*

Understanding addicts
Believe me, I wish I had bought shares in the parish, considering the number of them I used before I retired. I had just replaced one addiction with another ("How I prevailed on cigs," *Cont.*, Jan. 26) I think I am finally there—in a quit for life—but I will always consider myself an addict. Patrick Pearson's article depicts the real barriers that intelligent, motivated and sincere smokers are up against. Because when a bowl down to it, Health Canada, health insurance plans, the Canadian Cancer Society and all the others that let on they want to help—they are truly not there when you do need them. *Kim Strohmann, Winnipeg*

I find Patrick Pearson's essay to be full of finger-pointing and blame seeking toward the Canadian and Ontario governments. Not only does Pearson shrink his own responsibility for his addiction, but his blame negativity sets himself up for continued failure. I am one of those individuals who was depressed with career after living in a household for 38 plus years with a parent who was a very heavy smoker. As a mother, it bothered Pearson to dig deep inside her soul to learn the strength to save her children from potential nicotine-induced harm. Human resilience is capable of far more, and even greater challenges than nicotine addiction. *Veronica Kozol, London, Ont.*

Not enough questions
"The unknown war" (*Opinion*, Jan. 22) was a good article covering the atrocities and human crises we hear about every day. But it also raises serious questions. Why do horror things like that happen in Africa? Why is Joseph Kony, leader of the so-called Lord's Resistance Army, doing what he does? Which countries and companies sell him arms? These are the questions the article did not even raise, never mind try to answer. *A. Mike Wright, Victoria*

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PUTTING YOUR OWN Health First



Between juggling child care responsibilities, caring for elderly relatives and work—inside and outside the home—it's no wonder that women often place their own health down their list of priorities.

That often includes ignoring their risk of heart disease and stroke, including their own family history of these conditions, says the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Understanding your risk factor profile is vital—ask your doctor about the best ways to manage your risk at your next appointment. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of heart disease and stroke. According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, many women disregard signs such as angina or squeezing feeling in the chest, putting them at even greater risk. If you have been diagnosed with heart disease, review your treatment options.

By managing their risks and watching out for warning signs, women can play an active role in preventing heart disease and stroke.

For more information visit
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MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



THE MACLEAN'S SOUND BITE

Monday mornings are hectic for Maclean's manager of public relations, Saseel Khanna (above). That's when the magazine lets newswriters and is first selected not only by Canadian news consumers, but also by reporters at other media outlets. It's Khanna's responsibility to talk with journalists from outside news organizations who are looking to tap into the knowledge that Maclean's reporters have to offer.

"We receive dozens of calls a week from external reporters looking to interview our journalists on stories they've written for Maclean's or to serve as on-air experts on their respective fields," says Khanna. For example, when Maclean's annual university ranking issue hit newstands last September, the magazine received over 70 phone calls within the first 12 hours of the results being released. That represents virtually every major print daily and broadcaster in the country.

The editor of the ranking, Ann Dowsett Johnston, was booked solid for interviews with outside press from 7 a.m. that Monday morning until late into the evening. "She took a 20-minute break to eat and literally lost her voice by the end of the day," says Khanna. Everyone from the CBC to the Globe and Mail was looking for insight into the state of the Canadian post-secondary landscape, Khanna adds.

Maclean's reporters are called upon for their expertise on a variety of topics that matter to Canadians. Back Page columnist Paul Wells often appears on CBC's The National to discuss politics. National affairs correspondent Charlie Gillis conducted a series of interviews to share the results of the annual Maclean's year-end poll in December (including an appearance on CTV's Canada AM). Respected film critic Brian Johnston is regularly called upon to comment on arts and culture.

"I think the attention we receive from external media outlets speaks to the trust Maclean's has established with its readers over the last near-century," says Khanna. "Because our writers are not having to churn out stories on a daily basis, and because they have more resources than reporters at other news outlets, they're able to delve deeper into an issue and provide analysis and perspective."

To view some of Paul Wells' commentary from Ottawa, including his thoughts on last week's Throne Speech, visit his blog at www.annafire.ca/paulwells.

For further information about this article, contact: behindthescenes@maclean.ca.



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ScoreCard

▼ Ben Cheng, his claim that only "European or French men" wear hockey skirts is absurd, arrogant and reprehensible misrepresentation of risk, but "viewer" of poster by commissioner of official languages equally obnoxious. When old federal bilingual watchdog becomes the thought police?

▲ Hated appointment: Super Bowl display of Janet Jackson's WHIP (the use of Miss Bolander's hip, America's #1 booty, Justin Timberlake calls it a "wonderful malfunction." She calls it a "spontaneous event.") Bolander: ideal outfit "marketing." On bright side: it put a quick end to the Jackson halftone show even.

▼ General W. Neufeld: Mocking television networks might be a stretch (and of free world, oh, not that he invented Iraq war or imaginary weapons class—keep will be here after all, but didn't sleep before halftone on Super Bowl Sunday? Now that's embarrassing).

▲ Serge Clément: Artist won \$500 in drawings from Guinness. Que, after his arrest for graffiti (graffiti on the street while walking a park dog as a chair. He explained he was "speaking in poetry" but, finally, let it be the dog).

▲ Esther Denner: Induced public health nurse from Portland, ME, takes her first bite of a McDonald's hamburger—44 years old. "I think it's nice," she told reporter. "Tastes same 100 or August, first year, of course, sometimes."



Society | Who poisoned the dogs of Withrow Park?

Ordinarily, the death of a dog, even a cute little Cavalier King Charles spaniel like T-Bone, is not something that would grip a big city like Toronto for days on end. But last poisoning in central Withrow Park, along with 15 others who became violently ill after eating chunks of hot dogs spiked with a rare pesticide, has dominated the talk shows and front pages like few other events. Rewards have been offered. A phalanx of police and health-safety officials, some in chemical suits, have scoured the park. Police are now in the midst of what they call a "full blown criminal investigation." Concerns that authorities might not be prepared for a biochemical attack are probably behind the test. Though all we can really say for sure at this point is that humans are a strange breed.

The emotions that have been unleashed by the poisoned dogs of Withrow Park should not surprise. By one count, there are 60,000 or so dogs in Metro Toronto and about 15,000 parks. 23 of these have officials come file

Nicole Byles, with poison victims Romeo (left) and Belle, emergency response



Withrow, south of the park and north of the baseball diamond, where canines run free.

Dog owners surely think as an afterthought the dog walking equivalent to a municipal rink. Non-dog owners say parks should be for people primarily and that off-leash dogs can't always be controlled. Both arguments have been fought over for years at City Hall. Dog poisonings, thankfully, are a rare occurrence, though there was one case patient in Portland, Ore., last year—eight dogs poisoned, also in a off-leash park. If there's a comforting factor in all this, it has been the almost universal outpouring of harm and outrage even as opponents in the long-debated keep to their long-held positions. Psychologically, we humans may have come to grasp the commonplace of what is really an act of terror. But we are not really going to have it shoved down our throats.

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Quote of the week | "The history of our nation has demonstrated that separate is seldom, if ever, equal." THE MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT, ruling that only full marriage rights for gay couples—not simply civil unions—pass the constitutional test

WARNINGS Health authorities in Canada and the U.S. warned doctors to be extra vigilant about prescribing seven popular anti-depressants, including Prozac and Zoloft, to children and especially teenagers because of a heightened risk of suicide.

Women, especially those over 50 years old, who take hormone replacement for menopause face an "unacceptably high risk" of new breast, Swedish researchers said, reinforcing an earlier U.S. study.

SPACE The Hubble Space Telescope detected oxygen and carbon, the cornerstones of life on earth, on a distant gaseous planet 150 light-years away.

CANADA

PLACEMAKERS Drawn and 500 Canadian soldiers will remain in Afghanistan after official deployment ends this summer. The announcement came as 19 Canadian soldiers, most of them bound for Kabul, tested positive for drugs. They now face disciplinary action following a raid by military police in the Valmiera base near Qandahar City.

Ottawa was also investigating an allegation by someone said to represent the Taliban

that the suicide bomber who killed Cpl. Jamie Murphy last month was a Canadian.

EXTRADITION Immigration Minister Judy Sgro said she will consider a humanitarian solution in the case of Song Dae Ra, a 33-year-old North Korean defector and former trade official who was ordered deported by the Immigration Refugee Board even as it agreed he would likely be executed by Pyongyang.



It's six-year-old son was allowed to stay in Canada. His wife had been barred back to North Korea and was executed there in 2002 because of his "act of treason."

RMS Charlotte's police shut down three bootleggers—full service bars in suburban houses—only to find them back in operation the next night. Super Bowl Sunday. A B.C. tradition, the house-based bars used to have become more popular because of a smoking ban in licensed establishments.

FISH B.C. quietly let fish farmers off the hook for as much as \$2.3 million in outstanding fines for such offences as expiring

their operations without proper permits, according to documents just released.

ARSON Quebec police suspect arson in an early morning fire at the Auberge Grand Mère, the Shawinigan hotel that was at the centre of a controversy surrounding former prime minister Jean Chretien in 2000. Chretien was cleared of an ethics violation for lobbying for a \$625,000 government loan to the hotel.

In a related development, the former head of the Business Development Bank of Canada, François Beaudoin, who dined he was ousted for backing Chretien on the loan, won a lawsuit that removed his \$200,000 annual pension and severance package.

SETTLEMENTS An Ontario court has approved what should be the final step in reimbursement for the Mount Cashel child abuse scandal, a \$15.5-million payout to 83 victims who were molested, raped or beaten by a mix of priests over a 20-year period ending in the late 1980s.

Transcendental fact, Solonchewen agreed to pay \$5.3 million to the Klusken family, who were charged in 1991—and later completely exonerated—on charges of having sexually assaulted foster children in their care.



THE HAJJ With the approval of the nation's most senior cleric, Saudi Arabia will modernize the holy sites of Mecca. • While U.S. follows the annual hajj pilgrimage, where 251 devotees were recently crushed to death while participating in a symbolic stoning of the devil.

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PAUL IS IN THE BUILDING

Martin is finally PM. But have there been any clues about what will define his era, JOHN GEDDES asks.

ONE OF THE few reasonable lines to interrupt the wordplay in *The Lord of the Rings*: The return of the King comes when Sir Ian McKellen, as Gandalf, says of the hall before battle, "It's the deep breath before the plunge." There was a moment like that in Parliament last week—or as close as federal politics gets. It came in the House of Commons, as MPs gathered behind long, heralded, anachronistic demands, as the Senate to hear the Speech from the Throne. The senators, along with hordes of dignitaries, assorted political luminaries and fixers, and the media throng, were all waiting in the passage chamber. The MPs got

a few minutes, enough, to mull about, chatting among themselves, discussing and negotiating ideas above them all but deserted for a change. Conservatives crossed the aisle to shake paws with Liberals. Paul Martin sat down, leaning over their desks to exchange pleasantries with Jean Charest. Cheers erupted. Everybody took the breath.

Then came the plunge into the Martin era. The MPs marched through the crowded aisle corridors to what they call the "other place," where Governor General Adrienne Clarkson read 25 pages worth of promises, principles and platitudes that were supposed to lay out Martin's agenda—single leader for the first round of partisan legislation that will finally come to a head in a spring election. But like the movie gear struggling to follow the show, debates, ones and twos, and the final moments of the Royal Inauguration, the Canadian voter might feel hard-pressed to keep track of what's going on. The case involves a new PM, a new Conservative jump, and a renewed NDP. And now, in the Throne Speech, it's an epic script, in which Mar-

tin promises to do everything from re-forging democracy and strengthening social programs to restoring Canada's reputation in the world.

But experience teaches that Throne Speeches offer only hints of what ends up mattering most to new governments. Brian Mulroney's first mentioned exploring "new approaches to a better and mutually advantageous trading relationship" with the U.S.—the mildest possible allusion to the coming free trade revolution. Charest's referred to bringing the "deficit and deficit under control in a manner that is compatible with pursuing Canadians back to work"—a bland foreshadowing of the budget-balancing struggle that was in store. It's impossible to pluck out the story line that might, with hindsight, look like the start of Martin's defining moves. But some intriguing possibilities are now on the table.

It's unclear what a standing ovation during the first day in office in the House of Commons



The health-care PM. Martin calls health care his top priority. Not coincidentally, polls show it's also the main worry of Canadians. Martin moved on shortening waiting times for diagnosis and treatment. His priorities: emergency rooms and MRI clinics aren't managed by Ottawa. In fact, the whole health system is a provincial jurisdiction. Martin may well decide to funnel a lot more money into this system from on high—as the provinces demand. But the troubles remain mostly the province's to fix, and Martin can't expect the Infrastructure fund for any solutions. His promise to set up a new Canada Public Health Agency to cope with the next SARS incident may prove obvious federal project. But as for the way

hospitals run, no federal leader can easily take the lead on this crucial issue.

The democratic reform PM. Martin vows to make ordinary MPs matter more. But, then, so did Mulroney, whose maiden Throne Speech promised "enhancement of the role of the private member." And Charest, whose first vowed to provide MPs "a greater opportunity to contribute." The difference is that Martin moved fast, tabling legislation last week to begin liberating backbenchers. "The real reformers out there would be to have members of Parliament playing silent roles in the epic story of Canada," Martin said. But up to now, his close advisers have not been known for their outgoing way with Liberals who cross them. If they listen

THE old questions about the real Martin remain. He's happy to let the pigeonholing game go unresolved.

up enough now to let a two-headed spirit bloom, that could go a long way to giving their boss's prime ministry in defining quality. But with all parties doing ends in anticipation of a spring election, real signs of MP emancipation might have to wait.

The progressive PM. Along with health care, a part of Throne Speech promises are

to position the Liberals slightly to the left. (Jack Layton has been accused.) There were vows to support early childhood development, the disabled, urban Aboriginals, and low-income families struggling to afford college or university for their children. More on how earned credit on this side of his agenda. As finance minister, he introduced landmark child tax breaks for low-income working families. But as prime minister, might he leave his mark by emphasizing programs to help the poor? His own track record suggests he sees the political necessity of balancing such reforms with other measures, at least as generous, tailored for middle class voters. The tax relief of the Chrétien era, largely designed by Martin,

leaves a typical middle-class two-income family of four, with an income of \$60,000, paying \$1,295 less federal tax for 2004, compared with a low-income single parent of one child earning \$25,000 who is \$896 better off.

The international PM. No staple of Thorne's speeches is more yawn-inducing than the announcement of a policy review. At first glance, Martin's promised review of international policies is no exception. Still, there are grounds for seeing this prime minister, at this particular moment, as having unusual potential for lacking pretence on the world stage. Martin inherits from Chrétien a commitment to steadily increase overseas assistance, especially to Africa, if he can combine that with a credible boom in defence spending, foreign-policy crises from both left and right will have a lot to giggle about. And this turn around could happen against the backdrop of developing crises in the U.S. that make Canada look eminently well-governed to foreign observers—and investors.

On the very day that Martin's Thorne Speech committed Canada to expanded social spending within a balanced budget, George W. Bush was tableting a budget proposal that would cut U.S. domestic programs, boost military spending, and leave a US\$300-billion deficit.

Of course, events might drive Martin in entirely unforeseeable directions. On the opposition side, success in pinning their own label on him. Or he might get mugged on a campaign trail in a plane. After his long return to Ottawa, after the speech and the leadership campaign, after his week's debate with PM, the old questions about the real Martin remain. Is he a father-absent business Liberal, a cut-throat product of corporate Canada? Or does he left politics to his claims to be, true, like Paul Martin Sr.'s social U.S. liberal? Martin's hope to let the piggyback game go untested. "We're moving neither right nor left," he said in his maiden speech as prime minister, "but in the direction Canada demands—and forward." He's taking his plunge right up the middle. ■

BREWING UP NEW POLICIES

LOCATION IS everything for a coffee shop. The Roasted Cherry Coffee House sits on the shortest route between Parliament Hill and the offices, a few blocks away, of the finance minister. Back when Paul Martin had that job, he walked by hundreds of times. His staff stopped in for much-needed caffeine to get them through his legendary long meetings. Two years ago, the Roasted Cherry was taken over by the Ottawa not-for-profit group New Beginnings for Youth, which offers work experience and other help to young people who've had a break fall on a money-making basis. The shop went from being an ordinary small business to part of what's sometimes called the "social economy." And now it might just be Canada's most famous example of that blend of private-enterprise hustle and philanthropic heart. Martin passed

Martin wants to foster more social-economy enterprises like Ottawa's Roasted Cherry.

the shop last week in his first speech in the House as prime minister, after dropping in for coffee on the morning of the Thorne Speech.

At the Roasted Cherry, everything from managing the cash to firing up the espresso machine is done by university and high-school students, and employees the organizers call "youth at risk"—often dropouts or young people who can't afford post-secondary education. "The risk leads to mentoring," says Rob Trapp, executive director of New Beginnings for Youth. "We get university students helping out marginalized kids." Profits are poured back into youth education projects and scholarships. Armina Djallal, a 25-year-old single mother who has been working in the shop since last

fall, said she hopes to use the skills she's picking up to eventually open her own business. "I've been learning about managing a plant," she said. "They've given me a chance to work my schedule around my three-year-old daughter."

A policy threat that brings together the words "social" and "economy" seems tailor-made for Martin. As a former businessman and finance minister, he's highly credible on economic issues, and welding it into credentials to social policy innovation would be a political hander's dream. In the House, Martin promised that over the next year the government will come up with new policies to help social entrepreneurs, including giving access for the first time to federal programs designed to support for-profit small businesses. Details are still to be worked out. Anything the government can do will be welcome. Trapp said, but he's not out of the Roasted Cherry culture to count on such a help. "Charities need to stand on their own," he said. "We need to be entrepreneurial in spirit." ■

LIVING IN FEAR

The conflict may be ending, but women and girls in the Congo still face violence

More than five years of civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo have resulted in an estimated 3.3 million deaths—making it the deadliest conflict in African history. Now, even as hostilities are coming to an end in most parts of the country, abuses remain on the road to peace and security. In this second of four installments from the Congo, Dr. Samantha Muir of War Child Canada examines some of the challenges facing Congolese women and girls.

THE GIRLS, a dozen of them, cover their mouths when they giggle and nudge each other under the table as I encourage them to write their names. On the school blackboard, all the vowels of the alphabet run together in delicate feminine cursive. One girl picks up my knapsack, slings it over her shoulder, and struts around the room doing her best *maquisa* (Swahili for white person) impersonation. She pretends to be very important, compulsively checking a mobile phone wristwatch, a portable music that evokes squeals of delight from her peers. Sister Nathalia, a disarmingly pretty girl with silver hair and oversized glasses, commands the girls' attention with a routine "Gaafu" (but enough). She is humorous, but she does mean business.

The girls are clever, colourful and inquisitive—everything you'd expect from eight- to 12-year-olds. But what makes them extraordinary is that they've been forced to find refuge in this children's orphanage in the eastern zone of Ituri because they are believed to be witches. Giselle Eshana is 13. She is proud to know that she carries her name almost perfectly, but otherwise rarely makes eye contact. On Christmas Eve, 2002, her mother passed away. Her father remarried. Giselle's new stepmother found fault with everything she did—she didn't help enough with the cooking or cleaning, she was easily distracted, she



Alice was raped and cut out with a knife while going to a clinic to seek malaria treatment.

would not assist in the fields or her brothers. She was the last one in the family allowed to eat at meals and quickly became malnourished. Eventually, her stepmother accused her of using sorcery to kill her mother, and of plotting to do the same to her.

Giselle was taken to a traditional healer

THERE are banners strung over some roads that say: 'Raping a woman is the same as raping your own mother.'

specializing in droughts. For several days she was kept in isolation with no food or water, her hands roped behind her back. Eventually, she managed to flee, and was picked up by the police, who delivered her to the orphanage. "The girls know what they have been accused of, and come to believe that perhaps they are responsible for these things—a death in the family, disease, poverty," says Sister Nathalia, who runs the orphanage. "So we believe that this is simply not the case. Most of the girls are rejected by their families for predictable reasons: for example, the father remarries and the new wife doesn't accept the daughter, or some have behavioural problems or learning disabilities. We try to be an easy escape to get rid of them."

While there are no official numbers of Congolese girls accused of witchcraft, the United Nations estimates that as many as 60 percent of children in orphanages were forced from their homes due to allegations of sorcery. Similarly, hundreds of adult women branded as "witches" by their family members or communities are incarcerated every year. And while belief in the occult has existed in the Congo for generations, sources say the number of individuals—mostly female—labelled as witches has increased dramatically since the country's civil war began in 1997. In many instances, these females are scapegoats, says Sister Nathalia. "They become a discussion for the poverty and death experienced by the family, when the family should be blaming the war." Violence against women is also widespread



Guille (right) and her friend live in an orphanage after being accused of witchcraft

in a country where a half-dozen of our best soldiers down local roads. Marieme and Aline are 15 and 17 respectively, and currently undergoing a skills-training program for female girls in Burkina Faso. Marieme, wearing a red and white sari and a head-styled wooden beanie, rushes into the room and wraps her arms around my neck. Aline, her deep fringe covered by a white over-sized shirt, wearily shuffles in and drops into a chair. Marieme begins to tell her story once before I have the chance to introduce myself.

Her mother was killed in the war. Her father remarried, and the stepmother squeezed her. There was little food, and as the only girl Marieme was forced to go into town to buy for herself and her four brothers. One day, when she was 14, five militiamen attacked her on the road near her rural home. She was gang-raped to the point of asystole. "When I awoke," she says, "I was bleeding. I couldn't stop. An old woman came to help me, she boiled water, cleaned me up and sent me home." Several months later, she was raped again.

Instead of returning home after that assault, she went to Burkina and took up residence in a local orphanage.

Aline was raped a month ago. "I'd been sick, I was very sick with malaria," she says. "My mother gave me money to go to the clinic. Along the road, three young men

'AS former militiamen are demobilized, there is little for them to do, putting women at increased risk,' says one aid worker

grabbed me from behind, and one held my leg while the others raped me. When I yelled, they cut my face with a hunting knife." She takes off her running shoes to show me the thick scar that runs from her hand to her left ankle across her foot, stopping short of her big toe. The wound was so deep that

she was unable to walk, eventually, a group of students found her and carried her home.

She hasn't yet sought treatment for the rape because her family can't afford the roughly \$10 needed to test her for HIV and otherwise sexually transmitted diseases. UNICEF estimates that the prevalence of HIV infection in the Congo may be as high as 20 per cent—both girls and men worry daily about the possibility that they may be infected. But Marieme, who would like to become a nurse, says she'd prefer not to know. Aline, though, would like to get married and have children, and knows that will not be possible until she can prove she is "clean."

Local non-governmental organizations, international humanitarian agencies and hospitals in the Congo are all reporting staggering numbers of rapes. Some aid agencies estimate that as many as one in three females may be victims. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), a charity that funds sexual assault treatment programs at Paris hospitals in Burkina, says that rape cases range from babies to old women in their 80s. Some victims have been raped and tortured



In front of their families: In addition to the risk of infection and the psychological trauma, the victims attacked to rape often reject that women will face rejection in their homes, perpetuating a cycle of devastation and despair. And the extreme violence of some of the rapes leaves many women with vaginal fistulas—a condition where the walls between the vagina, rectum and bladder are torn away, and which requires extensive and painful reconstructive surgery. Few women in the Congo have gynecologists trained in such procedures, leaving victims with no alternative but to hope that someday they'll receive help.

Aline Winkaba (center) has the flu, but she realized she had no rights, whatsoever

of the war, so many women are only unable to come forward. And as the peace process moves forward, and former militiamen are demobilized and move back into the communities, there is little for them to do, putting women at increased risk.

In the Congo's male-dominated society, women face other problems as well. In Congo, along the Nigerian border, I met Winkaba Fashu, a 25-year-old widow with two young children. A year ago her husband was killed in an accident. Her father-in-law told her to marry one of his other sons. When she refused, she was locked out of her home and told never to return. With no food or clothing for herself or her children, Winkaba returned to the house one evening to try to contact her father-in-law to let her keep a few of her things. He sent a neighbor to fetch the police, and Winkaba was arrested on the spot and thrown in jail.

The police told her that as a woman she was not entitled to any of her husband's

property. But for a fee of \$50 they would be happy to release her. "What could I do?" she asks me, naming her youngest child. "I had nothing. The war has done this to people. If you are a woman you are worthless—they can just throw you away and no one cares." Winkaba was finally released with the help of a local legal aid group, the Association for the Defense of Human Rights. Among other cases the organization has dealt with are women imprisoned for crimes that include "bad debt," the theft of a loaf of food, prostitution and witchcraft.

Efforts are underway to try to stop the violence and improve the lives of Congolese women. Several international aid agencies have launched programs to support victims of sexual abuse in partnership with local women's groups. There are also attempts to raise public awareness. Demonstrations have been staged on the main streets of Burkina this year. "Raping a woman is the same as raping your own mother." The slogan is stamped at men, but as the Congo struggles to put aside the devastation of war, too many are not listening. M

KING RALPH'S LONG REIGN

The premier seems to gain popularity each passing day. What's his secret?

ON THE EVENING of March 12, 2006, Ralph Klein broke in the greatest political triumph of his life. Alberta's Progressive Conservative government had just won his third consecutive majority and by the biggest margin yet—74 seats for the Tories, seven for the Liberals and two for the New Democrats. "Welcome to Ralph's world," Klein famously intoned after stepping to the microphones to address cheering supporters in Calgary. It was his most pithy, and coherent, coherent of the night. During the remainder of a rambling victory speech, Klein sometimes seemed literally at a loss for words, as he struggled to recall the when and where of particular campaign encounters. He looked around the room, which was growing quieter by the minute. Even some Tory diehards were starting to look befuddled, as if to say, is that it?

We now know what many of us then suspected: Klein's victory, maddening to the best of times, was impaired that night by the generous portions of red wine he had consumed while watching the results roll in. This, and much else, came into the public domain after an incident just before Christmas of 2001 when an envious Klein rode into a homeless shelter in Edmonton late one evening and got into an angry exchange with some of the residents. When the story broke, a tearful Klein appeared before the camera, apologized and vowed to do better never to drink again. Then, as so often happens in the chaotic political life of the man everyone here calls Ralph, the public rallied to his side. He became, if that's possible, even more popular.

What other Canadian politician could have pulled that off? OK, so there's B.C.

Premier Gordon Campbell, who survived a drunk-driving charge in January 2003. He did so by closely following the Klein script: apologize, cry, promise to abstain. But Campbell was not then, and is not now, regarded with much affection by B.C. voters. Contrast that with Alberta, where Klein, 61, has already scored his intention to seek a fourth mandate in the spring of 2009. It can't poll suggest that not only are the Tories (now in power 33 consecutive years and counting) headed for another land slide victory, but Klein's personal approval ratings actually surpass support for his party. So at a time when many politicians are getting nailed left and right, Klein's job seems safe for however long he wants it.

How to explain the Klein phenomenon?

PART of it comes down to personality—a lot of Albertans like Klein, even if they disagree with his policies.

Part of it—a big part—comes down to personality. Klein is someone a lot of Albertans have trouble disliking, even when they disagree with his policies. The son of a professional wrestler, he grew up in a working-class Calgary neighborhood and to Canada's best-known high school dropout (though, to be credit, he went back to school, became a business-college principal, and is now studying for a communications degree from Edmonton-based Athabasca University). Despite more than two decades in public life (he also spent three terms as the wild-

ly popular mayor of Calgary), Klein remains the cartoon touch. He lives much of the year with his wife, Colleen, in a modest, three-bedroom bungalow in his home city, drives a 1977 Volkswagen Beetle and finances blue jeans and casual shirts when off duty.

True to his roots, Klein cares more about how he comes across in the blue-collar *Sun* newspapers than in the pages of, say, the *Globe and Mail*—which may help explain some of the curious crusades he takes on. This fall, for example, an addicts' self-help club in Edmonton was seeking an exemption from that city's stringent anti-smoking bylaw so its members could continue to puff away at the public facility where they regularly meet to help each other get off drugs and booze. Given his own high-profile battle with the bottle, one might have thought that Klein, a longtime smoker, would own dear of the issue. Instead, he voiced strong support for the club's cause, all of it lavishly reported in the *Edmonton Sun*.

Perhaps Klein was taken with the name the recovering addict gave themselves: the Keep It Simple Club. It could serve as his political mantra. Klein is often surprisingly mild when going public, speaking, his followers disappear when he relies on direct, hidden, prepared texts. He also appears leery about one-on-one interviews when he can be challenged at length on policy, and gives very few of them. Where Klein really shines, though, is in the media arena, which he does more frequently and at greater length than any other major politician in Canada. Here, the former television reporter is in his element, delivering the easy quip, the 30-second clip, that will invariably be heard on



ILLUSTRATION BY VICTOR BLAND

households across the province.

Klein's penchant for boiling complex issues down to the basics sometimes lands him in trouble. But even then—such as his lack-of-control argument in his favour. A case in point: after the discovery of a single mud nest in Alberta devastated the province's \$5.3-billion-a-year beef industry, Klein said the rancher who owned the sick animal

should have "shot, shot dead and shot up." Industry officials quickly distanced themselves from the remark, fearing it could raise doubts about their commitment to public safety. So why would Klein say such a thing? "Because he's in touch enough with the average rancher and feedlot operator to know what they are saying," explains Paron Ellis, a political scientist at Lethbridge College.

ity College, is the heart of Alberta's feedlot country. "That place might once be seen of the people as a pig."

Klein has other obvious skills as a politician. He is neither an ideologue nor a revolutionary; he governs as a pragmatist from the centre, though admirably in Alberta, this suits him all further to the right than in the rest of the country. He launches plenty of bold crusades—in favour of more private health care, against the Kyoto accord—but rarely follows through, especially if his finely tuned political antennae tell him he's out of step with public opinion. And hard as it is for people outside Alberta to believe, his hardest detractors are hard-core conservatives who see the government's high levels of program spending and the premier's political elasticity as proof Klein is, well, a done Liberal.

Which brings us to another of Klein's better advantages: he's in charge of a very wealthy province. When he messes up, as he did by imposing electricity deregulation, he has the financial wherewithal to limit the political damage. So far prior to the last provin-

HE can appear surprisingly stiff during speeches, but his folksiness really comes through in scrums.

vincial election, he rolled out \$4.3 billion worth of energy rebates to residential and industrial users. Now, as the next election approaches, he's pointing priority into a reinsurance market, including education and health care.

Finally, Klein benefits from Alberta's unique political culture. There is no tradition of opposition in the province. Government are routinely elected by landslide margins and left in power for abnormally long periods of time. As a born and bred Albertan, I've never understood this hard-man culture, but there's no denying it exists. Consider that Alberta turns 100 years old in 2005 (another reason Klein wants to stick around). Over that century, there have been exactly four (count 'em) changes in government. In each case, an established party was replaced by a new upstart. No one, of course, expects that to happen to the Tories while Klein is still in the helm. Until then, it's still Ralph's world; the rest of us just live in it.

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Specially formulated for relief of itchy, red eyes caused by allergies to pollen, trees, grass, ragweed, pets, dust or mould. New Vismine Advance Allergy's dual action formula with an antihistamine and a redness reliever will help your eyes to stop itching, and look and feel good again. For more info visit www.vismine.ca



LISTERINE

As the only non-prescription mouth rinse recognized by the Canadian Dental Association for gingivitis, Listerine is clinically proven to reduce and prevent the progression of gingivitis when used in a properly applied program of oral hygiene and dental care. Available in Original, Fresh Burst and Cool Mint Flavours. For extra dental protection, try Listerine Tartar Control and Fluoride Listerine. For more info visit www.listerine.com



NicoDERM

NicoDerm's exclusive controlled release technology offers 24-hour protection and gives your body a steady supply of nicotine to help protect you against cravings. You can double your chances of success** with NicoDerm, the patch most recommended by doctors and pharmacists.† For more info visit www.nicoderm.ca or call 1-866-311-5655



nicorette

Nicorette gum can help you stop smoking by reducing nicotine cravings and can also be used in situations in which you temporarily refrain from smoking. Chew a piece each time you feel the urge to smoke anytime, anywhere. For more info visit www.nicorette.ca or call 1-866-311-5655

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*The brand names listed above are one of the Pfizer family of registered trademarks.
†Comparison to Nicorette, 2005 Health Canada Clinical Studies and Therapeutic Index, 2007 June 2002
**Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of Canada (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of Canada) April 2005



Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York
Living Weight While The World Watches

An actress and an author, Sarah Ferguson has become an independent businesswoman. A helicopter pilot, she has written a series of children's books about Budgie, a young helicopter, as well as her autobiography *My Story* and half a dozen other books. She is the founder of two charities dedicated to the safety and well being of children.



Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan
Achieving Personal Balance in A Complex World

Born to an Arab-American family and raised and educated in the United States, Queen Noor became a queen, wife, mother of four, a social activist and a champion of peace, human rights, women's and children's welfare, education, health, cultural harmony and the arts. The author of the *New York Times* best seller *LEAP OF FAITH: Memoirs Of An Unexpected Life*, she has been awarded numerous international awards and honorary doctorates in international relations, law and humane letters.



Richard Simmons
High-energy Aerobics For 1,000

The self-proclaimed Court Jester of Health, Richard Simmons, bounded to the forefront of the fitness craze with his infectious humour and indefatigable energy. His unique brand of entertainment made him the star of his own daytime TV program, but it is his compassion for those struggling with obesity and food addiction that makes Simmons one of the most popular motivators in the world.



Crest Whitening Expressions

New **Crest Whitening Expressions** is our first full line of toothpastes that combine Crest's whitening technology with refreshing flavours to deliver an unexpected brushing experience. **Cinnamon Rush** — A bold blast of cinnamon that keeps the taste buds tingling. **Extreme Herbal Mint** — An intense rush of natural mint with herbal extracts for an invigorating brushing experience. **Fresh Citrus Breeze** — A light splash of citrus flavour that leaves the mouth feeling clean and refreshed.

P&G

Touching lives, improving life.

PANTENE



Pantene

Introducing new **Pantene Pro-V Full & Thick** shampoos and conditioner. Pantene Full & Thick products are designed to keep thickening hair looking thick, full and strong by helping to prevent hair loss from breakage. With the Pantene Full & Thick shampoo and conditioner system, hair looks thicker and stronger in 10 days.* **Guaranteed**** Pantene — that's the beauty of healthy looking hair!

* In testing, major % of women saw a difference in hair count (per inch) in 10 days.
 ** Full effect is guaranteed on your money back. Just call 1-800-224-7462. Return receipt required. Applies to purchases after 2/28/98. ©1998 P&G. Offer ends 12/31/98.

OLAY



Olay Regenerist

Olay Regenerist, a non-invasive skin moisturizing treatment that beautifully regenerates skin's appearance, one cell at a time. Formulated with an exclusive Amino-Peptide complex, Olay Regenerist regenerates skin's appearance by exfoliating its outer layer, revealing newer skin. The latest addition to the Regenerist line-up is new **Regenerist Eye Lifting Serum**. It is specially formulated to hydrate, help lift the look and brighten the area around the eyelids, corners and under-eyes.

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Good Food, Good Life

We're all looking for ways to find a healthy balance between eating well and staying active — along with our other every day priorities! The good news is this balance can be achieved! It's really about making a variety of simple choices each day that enable us to be good to ourselves and those around us. At Nestlé, we genuinely believe good food and a good life go hand in hand. Once you find that balance, it can remain with you for a lifetime. Be good to yourself — you deserve it!

— Peter Hargreaves

President & CEO, Nestlé Canada



LEAN CUISINE
Menu

Lean Cuisine makes it easy to eat well by offering you 23 great-tasting varieties, including 7 Café Classics bowls. All Lean Cuisine Café Classics have at least 1 FULL serving of vegetables. Try one for lunch or dinner and you'll agree.

It's not just lean. IT'S CUISINE!



Nestlé baby

In 1867, Henri Nestlé created a baby food to save the life of a baby unable to be breast-fed. And today, Nestlé's infant nutrition research & development continues to nourish babies right from the start.

PowerBar

is great

Introducing **PowerBar Pro** — the energy bar that recharges you for even the toughest afternoon. Choose yogurt or chocolate coating wrapped around a delicious crispy centre — they're surprisingly only 154 calories!

- 6 g soy protein
- Enriched with 24 vitamins and minerals
- High in calcium, iron and folic acid



Nesquik

Canada's food guide to healthy eating recommends 2-3 servings of milk and milk products daily for children. A glass of milk with **Nesquik** provides all the nutrition and goodness of milk. It is an excellent source of calcium and vitamin D and contains no more sugar than a glass of unsweetened fruit juice. It tastes so great that kids will gulp it down like crazy! Nutrition and fun — all in one!

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SHOPPER'S



WE HELP PEOPLE BREATHE EASIER.

Whether it's a child with asthma or a senior with emphysema, chronic bronchitis, or COPD, The Lung Association helps people who have difficulty breathing. We fund respiratory research, promote better management of asthma, help those with chronic lung disease, and address the effects of air quality on lung health.

Something as simple as breathing is a struggle for one in five Canadians. Your support is needed, because when you can't breathe, nothing else matters.

THE  LUNG ASSOCIATION™
1-888-566-5864 www.lung.ca



Schering Consumer Healthcare Division

IS PROUD TO BE PART OF THE LIFEfestIVITIES

Schering Canada Inc. is committed to developing and bringing to market therapies and treatment programs that can improve people's health. Specializing in specific therapeutic areas and offering a broad range of products and brands, the company has positioned itself as the leading manufacturer and marketer of over-the-counter pharmaceutical and personal-care products.

Discover the quality products from Schering Canada Inc.



PEPSICO



We know you understand the importance of taking care of your body... but did you know that it doesn't have to involve a whole lot of sacrifice? Snacking sensibly is easy when you have great tasting options. Whether it be the pure, refreshing taste of AQUAFINA®, the satisfying flavour of a Baked® Lay's® chip, or the crunch of a Crispy Minis Soy™ crisp, you can eat sensibly without giving up great taste!

Afrin®



Afrin® No Drop Decongestant is the only nasal spray with the patented No Drop Microbe™ that tames Afrin won't drip down your throat or out your nose and will provide you with 12 hours of targeted relief from congestion. Stays up your nose. Stays on working.



Dr. Scholl's® Hi-Comfort™ 1/4-length insoles are designed to provide comfort and support without crowding your shoe. They are clinically proven to relieve tired, aching feet. Its 1/4-length design allows toes to move freely. They help your feet three ways: • Cushions ball-of-foot • Unique flexing arch provides customized support • Cushions heel. For more information, call 1-800-714-4449 or visit www.drscholls.ca

Coricidin



New Coricidin™ cough and cold relief may be taken by people with high blood pressure. Three different products are available to help relieve your symptoms - Cold & Flu, Cold & Flu Extra Strength and Cough & Cold.



Crispy Minis Soy
Now you can reap the health benefits of soy without compromising on taste! New Crispy Minis Soy gives you over 20% protein per serving and still has that huge taste and crunch you've come to expect from Crispy Minis.



AQUAFINA

Are you getting your eight glasses a day? Satisfy your daily hydration needs with the pure, clean taste of AQUAFINA. AQUAFINA guarantees consistent purity and great taste every time and is available in a variety of convenient sizes.



Baked® Lay's
Baked® Lay's is a great tasting scrumptious snack that fits into your active lifestyle. Enjoy the taste at your favourite chip with only 1.5 grams of fat per serving!! Baked! Lay's... everything you love about Lay's... now Baked!



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* Registered trademark of Schering Canada Inc.

1 Based on a 20g serving.
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AQUAFINA is a registered trademark of Pepsico Inc.
BAKED LAY'S and LAY'S are trademarks used under license by Frito-Lay Canada Inc. Inc. 2003.

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

March 12, 13 and 14, 2004



Her Majesty
Queen Noor of Jordan

3 p.m.
Fashion's secrets on Beauty
to Flare beauty director **Ying Che**

3 p.m.
Queen Yoga Circle by **Nicki Deane**
host of Queen's best-selling series of yoga
home videos

3 p.m.
Revealing Fatigue And Nutrition
by **Christine Cushing** host of Food Network
Canada's *Christine Cushing Live*

4 p.m.
Unwind And Win by **Dr. Ray** founder of The
Relaxation Response Institute

4 p.m.
Power Pilates by **Jodi Livingstone** a
certified pilates instructor, personal trainer
and fitness instructor

4 p.m.
From Runway To Runway by **Fiona Fawcett**
director **Adrienne Shoen**

4 p.m.
Makeup Day Makeover by glow magazine
beauty and style editor **Theray Hoang**



5 p.m.
Revealing Fatigue And Nutrition
by **Christine Cushing** host of Food Network
Canada's *Christine Cushing Live*

5 p.m.
Revealing The Weight-Loss Recipe
by **Dr. Ray** founder of The Relaxation Response
Institute and author **Dr. Barry Stinson**

5 p.m.
Queen Yoga Circle by **Nicki Deane**
host of Queen's best-selling series of yoga
home videos

6 p.m.
Living Well Overweight by **Dr. Mark Shapiro**
host of Balance, Television For Living Well/
Presented by **Protein & Geniste**
Pharmaceuticals

6 p.m.
Skin Is A Chief Choice by **Dr. Charles Lennie**
president of the Canadian Dermatology
Association. Presented by **Dr. of Day**

7 p.m.
**Achieving Personal Balance In A Complex
World** by **Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan**
Queen and senior period films

Consumer Magazines

Chateaufort
Flare
Glow
Maclean's
MoneySense
Today's Parent

Electronic Media

Chateaufort.com
Rogers Cable
Rogers High Speed Internet
Rogers Wireless
Today'sparent.com

Trade Publications

Canadian Grocer
Canadian Healthcare Manager
Cosmetics Magazine
Food In Canada
The Medical Post
Meeting And Incentive Travel
Pharmacy Post

Newspapers

Toronto Star

Radio Stations

CHFI
The Fan 590
Jack FM
680 News

Television Networks

Discovery Health Channel
Food Network Canada
HGTV
Independent Film Channel
Life Network
National Geographic
Omni One & Omni Two
Rogers Sportsnet
The Shopping Channel
Showcase Diva



Sarah Ferguson,
the Duchess of York

10 a.m.
**Fitness: Motivation And How You Can Get
It** by glow editor in chief **Jane Frutkine**

10 a.m.
Women's Medical Post Doctor-Patient Pool
by **Marlene's medical distribution**
Don Kuznetsov

10 a.m.
Women Auto-Know: Against Toxins
by **Charmaine columnist Maryanne Lemay**

10 a.m.
**The Must-Read Connection by Medical Post
columnist Dr. Susan Wolf**

10 a.m.
Menopause: The Life Affirming Transition
by **Jane Rogers**, editor of *A Friend Indeed*

10 a.m.
**Personal Longevity: The 10 Seconds To
Surviving Runway** by author, characterist
and life coach **Dr. Elaine Dembo**

10 a.m.
**Weight-Loss Made Easier: Shores The
Pouch That Work Against You**
by author **Dr. Barton Casselman**

10 a.m.
**Live Your Dreams: How To Launch The Small
Business You've Always Wanted**
by **MoneySense editor Sandra Martin**

10 a.m.
The Things Your Contractor Won't Tell You
by **author MoneySense editor Sandra Martin**

10 a.m.
Women's Most Powerful Tools
A panel discussion by **doctors, audiologists,
pharmacists and dietitians** gives you the
most information in the 1st place that
make the headlines

10 a.m.
Work And Family: The Fine Balance
by **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of *Home And Garden*
Television's *Dr. Elaine Dembo* *Family*

10 a.m.
Personal Training: Is It Right For You?
by **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, director of personal training
at Toronto's *Beveland Club*

10 a.m.
Seattle Cruise: Relaxation
by **Tony Little**, a regular 1000s expert on
The Shopping Channel

10 a.m.
Menopause: Safe And Gentle Medicines
for **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*

10 a.m.
A Chief's Guide To A Healthy Lifestyle
by **Chief Michael Smith**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*

10 a.m.
Child Obesity: A National Epidemic
A panel discussion by experts from *Today's
Parent*, *680 News* and *The Medical Post*

10 a.m.
Real Sexual Health by Rosemary Perlestein
manager of community professional
programs at *Shoppers Drug Mart*

10 a.m.
The Seventh To Real Beauty by The Tael
executive editor of *Chateaufort*

10 a.m.
A Chief's Guide To A Healthy Lifestyle
by **Chief Michael Smith**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*

10 a.m.
**Personal Longevity: The 10 Seconds To
Surviving Runway** by author, characterist
and life coach **Dr. Elaine Dembo**

10 a.m.
Work And Family: The Fine Balance
by **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of *Home And Garden*
Television's *Dr. Elaine Dembo* *Family*

10 a.m.
Living Right While The World Watches
by **Sarah Ferguson**, the Duchess of York
Queen and senior period films



Richard Simmons

10 a.m.
**Working In A Man's World And Working
To A Male Audience** by **Spiritual anchor**
Robert Niles and Judy Vance

10 a.m.
Take/Get And All Things Demonstrated
by **Rebecca Brown**, a regular fitness expert
on The Shopping Channel

10 a.m.
**Reveal Cancer: Don't Be A Survivor. Be A
Warrior** by **Canadian Breast Cancer
Foundation spokesperson Elaine Mount**

10 a.m.
**Associate To Menopause: Therapy For The
Menopause: Therapy** by **Dr. Henry Ouellet**
of the *University of Women's College*
Health Sciences Centre

10 a.m.
**The Power Of Saying No: How I Learned
The Hard Way** by **Marlene Omer**, CEO
News, afternoon news anchor

10 a.m.
**How Food Affects Your Mood: The Right
Food At The Right Time** by **Sam Genie**
researcher and author of *The Food*
Connection

10 a.m.
Revealing The Real Connection
by **Judy Karkut** and **Rebecca Niles**, authors
and co-founders of *Kapitel's*
hosted by *OMNI TV's* *Jeana Mervin*

10 a.m.
Menopause: Safe And Gentle Medicines
for **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*

10 a.m.
Menopause: Safe And Gentle Medicines
for **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*

10 a.m.
High-Carbohydrate For 1,000
by **Richard Simmons**, the self-proclaimed
Court Jester of Health

10 a.m.
Menopause: Safe And Gentle Medicines
for **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*

10 a.m.
Menopause: Safe And Gentle Medicines
for **Dr. Elaine Dembo**, host of Food
Network Canada's *Chief At Large*



Novartis, a leading healthcare company, is committed to improving the well-being of Canadians by providing innovative products and services.

Our consumer health division offers a wide range of over-the-counter medicines, including some of Canada's leading brands.

NeoCitran® Rest. Feel better.

Otrivin® Breathe easy. Fast.

Maalox®
Heartburn relief that's there when you need it.



Sneezing, achy, congested?

Need someone to tell you to go home and take care of yourself. (There, we just did.)

Why do some people think when they're sick, that getting rest is giving in. What if while you were getting rest, you were getting better? Getting better while... you take care of yourself in two important ways. With the real medicine of Neo Citran, to soothe and relieve cold and flu symptoms. And with sleep — which is so much easier to get, when you are not sneezing, achy and congested.

Always ready to go straight to the heart of the problem. Or, actually, the nose of the problem.

If you're suffering from a blocked or stuffy nose due to a cold or allergies, then you need a product like Otrivin. Unlike an oral decongestant, Otrivin goes straight to work reducing swelling in your nasal passages and sinuses.

And, it starts working within a few minutes for relief that can last for up to 10 hours.

Maalox won't let you miss a beat. Heartburn can be disruptive.

Whether you're working, socializing or relaxing, it seems to hit at the most inopportune time. There are Maalox Moments. But Maalox won't let you miss a beat. It helps relieve heartburn quickly, getting you back on track. Maalox is heartburn relief that's there when you need it.

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get **3x**
the points

with

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Triple Shoppers Optimum™ Points February 15 to March 13

on participating LIFEfest products in-store

Receive something extra at Shoppers Drug Mart by earning **3x** the Shoppers Optimum Points™ on items featured in this insert.

That's three times closer to rewarding yourself with **FREE** products at Shoppers Drug Mart.

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You'll earn 10 points for almost every dollar you spend at Shoppers.

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*Points with claims apply to March 13, 2008 only.

Not claim on any date of 08-03-08

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Channel.

Your life.
Their hands.
Any questions?

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The Surgeons

Wednesdays at 8 pm ET/5 pm PT

Watch *The Surgeons*, just one of the great shows on Discovery Health Channel, Canada's number one destination for dramatic, leading edge programming about the wonders of medical science and the human body.

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Visit www.newTVchannels.com or phone 1-866-396-0003.



Kraft Canada has long recognized the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle by balancing nutrition and physical activity. As part of Kraft's commitment to helping Canadians achieve balanced lifestyles, we offer a wide variety of products that can be part of a healthy diet. To find out more about healthy eating and for tips on keeping fit, visit www.kraftcanada.com. While you're there, sign up to receive Kraft's *what's cooking* magazine for even more great healthy living ideas.



KRAFT
LIGHT

Oregano, tarragon, colourful spices and a hint of garlic provide the zesty Italian-inspired flavour for this oil and vinegar dressing.

Kraft Light Dressing Italian Dressing gives you all the flavour of our regular Italian dressing with 80% less fat.



JELL-O

A perfect dessert starts with JELL-O products and their cool and refreshing taste. JELL-O Light jelly powder has 90% fewer calories than our regular JELL-O jelly powder. How many desserts have only 8 calories per serving? Plus, JELL-O Light is fat free as always.



KRAFT
LIGHT

Kraft Light Peanut Butter lets you enjoy the creamy melt-in-your-mouth taste of Canada's favourite Peanut Butter with 25% less fat than our regular Smooth Peanut Butter. It's a great way to start your day, but did you know it's also a good way to "tighten up" some of your favourite Kraft Peanut Butter desserts? Visit www.kraftcanada.com for our famous light cookie recipe.



CRYSTAL
LIGHT

Crystal Light Raspberry Ice Low Calorie Drink Mix is a refreshingly light beverage infused with a tangy raspberry flavour. More interesting is taste than plain water and less heavy than diet soft drinks, Crystal Light products transform water with out more than 5 calories per serving!



Kool-Aid
SPORT

When active kids reach for liquid refreshment, give them *Kool-Aid Sport* sports drink. Great taste is always a priority, and young athletes' bodies also need rehydration. *Kool-Aid Sport* is a winner on both counts! Available in four great tasting flavours.

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LIFefest Highlights

DEBBIE TRAVIS ON WORK AND FAMILY: THE FINE BALANCE



The host, co-creator and executive producer of HGTV's popular television series *Debbie Travis at Home* is a Montreal resident who is the definitive word on decorating the art of home decoration is more than 50 countries. At LIFefest, you will see Debbie up close and personal and hear her speak about her own experiences in balancing a demanding career and raising a family.



THE AGE OF DIGITAL CABLE HAS ARRIVED

The amazing choice of digital cable television has never been more affordable than with the LIFefest Program Specials. In addition to free trials and discounted program packages, you will receive a LIFefest Exclusive Offer of free professional installation of a digital terminal, a \$70 value. Let a Rogers professional handle all the set-up while you get an expert demonstration and enjoy the savings!

Presented by Rogers Cable and Discovery Health Channel



LIFE MAKEUP MAKEOVER

smashbox

Come find out why Hollywood celebrities and models can't get enough of these makeup must-haves. Developed at the world famous smashbox Photo Studios in Los Angeles, the smashbox artistry will be centre stage as the team shows you how easy it is to work with professional-quality products, and now you can use the cosmetics for a Hollywood perfect face.

Presented by The Shopping Channel

STRESS-FREE INNOVATIONS



You're familiar with the radiation blues. You've committed significant money to changing your life space. Your home or office is about to get the love and attention you always felt it deserved, but the computer is fighting with the architect, the demolition guys won't do things their way and it won't hold, and your pastel paint samples don't quite resemble the psychedelic stuff you just brought home in the car. But help is on the way at LIFefest! HGTV's *Real Remodel* master contractor Jon Cink and foreman Neil Davies offer *Real Remodel*, *Real World* tips that deliver the return on your investment without the stress.



ARTHUR VITAMINS MAGIC TIME at the LIFefest day-care centre



Bring your kids to Arthur Vitamins Magic Time, a 30-minute show featuring a professional magician who makes rabbits disappear, does appear and entertains with balloon tricks and much more. Kids have a chance to meet Arthur, the magician's faithful assistant, and get a signed picture/autograph following the Magic Time performance.

Presented by Jamieson Vitamins



Get in shape, chatelaine! Lace up your walking shoes and join Chatelaine editors for an easy, fun fitness walk. You'll get tips on fitness walking, stretching and how to start your own walking program. Grab your friends and family and join us at LIFefest at 8:45 a.m. on Sunday, March 14. Watch for details in the Toronto Star and on the LIFefest website at www.lifefest.ca.



BALANCING YOUR OWN MONEY Balancing your personal finances is about getting the numbers right: your credit is an important asset and you should learn how to use it right. Experts from CIBC VISA will guide you to smarter credit management. They'll show you how the buying decisions you make today affect your buying power tomorrow.

Presented by CIBC VISA



KNOWLEDGE IS THE NEW BALANCE

Life is about things that make every day special and arrive experts from Rogers High Speed Internet demonstrate one of the most useful sites around — Kraft's thingstodoalot.com. The Things To Do website series has been created especially for you by Kraft, Chatelaine, Today's Parent and Glow. Every month you'll find easy and fun ideas to make every day special for family, friends and neighbours!

HI SPEED



I shop therefore I am

Shopping is the new way of LIFE.
Every Saturday in the store and in the Star.

SATURDAY STAR

It's where you live
(& live to shop)

laughter

balance

health

smaller thighs

Because you want a lot out of life, we put a lot into it.

We all want to live happy, healthy lives. That's why we've developed a number of services to help you meet that goal.

Partner in your health

Our specially trained HealthWATCH Pharmacists are always available to provide expert advice and take the guesswork out of all those questions you may have about your health. Your HealthWATCH Pharmacist is a partner in your health, available when you need them.

Expert Health Advice

In addition to all the valuable pharmacy services you already receive from your HealthWATCH Pharmacist, each month your HealthWATCH Pharmacist will focus on bringing you important information and monitoring tools on various health issues such as heart health, diabetes and osteoporosis, just to name a few.

Peace of Mind

Our HealthWATCH System[®] keeps track of your medical history so we can alert you of any risks associated with potential drug interactions. And, for added convenience use HealthWATCH EasyRefill[™] and you can refill your prescription by phone or online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so your prescription will be ready when you are.^{*}

Home Health Care

We can help you live an independent and mobile lifestyle with solutions that make your home and life easy to navigate.

www.shoppersdrugmart.ca

*prescription will be ready within 24 hours

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Your life store.

Metro Toronto Convention Centre, North Building
March 12, 13 and 14, 2004

TICKETS ON SALE FEBRUARY 9!

Tickets are \$15 a day (taxes included) and are available in advance at all Ontario Shoppers Drug Mart locations or at the door. Children 14 and under are admitted free when accompanied by an adult.

For further information, visit our Web site at www.LIFEfest.ca



By car from the West

Take the 401 East to 427 South. Follow the Gardiner Expressway east toward Toronto and exit at Spadina Avenue. Go north to Front Street and turn right.

By car from the East

Take the 401 West to the Don Valley Parkway South. Follow the Gardiner Expressway west to Spadina Avenue. Go north to Front Street and turn right.

By public transit

Streetscars, buses, subways and GO trains connect all parts of Toronto and outlying areas to Union Station, the city's transportation hub. Union Station is accessible from the Metro Toronto

Convention Centre via the Skywalk, a weather-protected walkway. For more information, visit the Go Transit or Toronto Transit Commission Web sites at www.go Transit.com or www TTC.ca

Convention Centre's Parking Entrance
Entrance to the North Building parking garage is on the west side of Spadina Street, just south of Front Street West.

Following the directions provided, exit the Gardiner Expressway at Spadina Avenue, go north to Front Street and turn right. When you reach Spadina Street, turn right again. You will see the North Building parking garage on your right.

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TICKET INFO

Balance your life...



SUBARU



Win A 2004 Subaru Forester

Fill out a ballot when you attend LIFEfest

— March 12, 13 and 14 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre —
and you could win a 2004 Subaru Forester 2.5 XT.

The Forester 2.5 XT represents a new breed of Sport-Utility Vehicle. A vehicle that combines off-road toughness and versatility with the turbocharged spirit of world rally racing. The Automobile Journalists Association of Canada must have been impressed as they choose the Forester 2.5 XT as the "Best New SUV" for 2004 in the Canadian Car of the Year awards. Subaru turbocharged Forester 2.5 XT — the smarter way to build an SUV.

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GRAND PRIZE: One (1) 2004 Subaru Forester 2.5 XT. Approximate retail value \$39,000.00 GST. **HOW TO ENTER:** Fully Complete and correctly answer the six (6) test questions on the Official Grand Ballot available at LIFEfest. Test questions at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre between March 12, 2004 and March 14, 2004 and deposit it in the ballot box located at the Subaru booth. This contest is only open to legal residents of Canada, excluding Quebec who have reached the age of majority in their province of residence. Entries must be received no later than March 14, 2004 6:00 P.M. ET (Local). Entry per person. No purchase necessary. **HOW TO WIN:** On Friday March 19, 2004, 1 entrant will be selected by random draw and will be eligible to win the Grand Prize available in this contest. In order to be declared a winner, the selected entrant must complete and sign a Release & Indemnity Form. The odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Where applicable, this contest is subject to all federal, provincial and municipal laws.



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SHOPPERS
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CHIPS IN THE LIVING ROOM

Computer firms want to take over your home entertainment centre

"OH MY GOOD!" is what an RF antennaTM asks one of four lab-coat-clad techies who've just emerged from a black SUV with the F&B FOUR vanity plates. "Somebody call 911—we've got a digital emergency!" So goes the opening scene of *Digital Life*, the *Avengers* Guy, a slick parody of a popular reality program broadcast during an Intel Corp. presentation at the 2004 International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The bespectacled (and somewhat nerdy) faunusoids invade the home of a digitally deficient family, fitting them from a smorgasbord of wires and upgrading their obsolete entertainment devices.

Computer companies are trying to invade your living room—again. So the hero of this particular home invasion show is a computer that runs your entertainment centre.

Now, before you don your *Avenger* Burger steel and proclaim you'll never—*ever*—allow a computer anywhere near your reclining chair, understand it doesn't have to look like a computer. Instead of a dull grey tower, it could look like a DVD player or stereo component. And instead of using a mouse and keyboard to access things, you could record TV shows, watch DVD movies and listen to MP3s with a remote control, any where in the house. It's enough to make you want to be the next target for the crew of *Digital Eye*.

Consumer electronics is a US\$100-billion-a-year business in the U.S., and computer companies want a slice of that mammoth pie. So giants like Intel and Microsoft are creating new equipment that will function as your entertainment hub. It's risky. Tech companies have tried to slip into the living room before, only to be rebuffed: most customers found the concept confusing and the early equipment difficult to use. Now, though, it's a necessary gambit if computer firms want to expand their businesses.

New systems will provide TV, movies and digital music files with the click of a remote control.



"That's where the market is," says Eddie Chin, an analyst with International Data Corp. Canada Ltd., a technology research firm. "Today, it's all about digital content and how it's being shared."

The driving forces behind the computerized living room are a couple of technologies many consumers have already embraced. The first is the Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) home network that allows all your en-

tertainment options that appear on the TV and click on what you want. The computer acts as an all-in-one DVD/VCR stereo console that can record and play TV shows, movies and music. Microsoft is also offering an array of *Entertainment* gadgets that will connect several TVs to one central computer. It's a strategy Microsoft likes to call "seamless" computing. "Think of seams, meaning where things break," explains Greg Barber, director of Microsoft Canada's home and entertainment division. "You don't want to have your movies on a personal video recorder, photos on a camera and music on another drive. You want them all together, accessible from any room in the house. And that's no tool better at connecting all of these than a PC."

All of this poses a major challenge to manufacturers such as Panasonic and Sony, because such firms aren't just selling computers. Dell and Gateway, for instance, are selling competitively priced, flat-panel TVs too. So consumer electronics companies are fighting back by offering TVs that connect to the Internet and personal video recorders that can tape programs just like a VCR. "We make products that people want," insists senior executive Ramon Olabeo said at the Vegas show. "Some of our friends in the computer industry think this is easy." The battle lines have been drawn, and they go right through your living room.

CONSUMER
electronics is a US\$100-billion-a-year business, and computer companies want a slice of that pie

tertainment components to connect to one another wirelessly. The second is the Napster phenomenon, which introduced consumers to collecting digital versions of songs on their computers. These new computer entertainment systems will enable users to store and access much more than just music. "Whether it's movies or music or pictures," says Intel Canada's Doug Cooper, "we've moved into an era where all of that can be moved around electronically."

Microsoft has already launched Windows XP Media Center software, a user-friendly system that allows you to scroll down lists

NEW STOCK COPS

Canada needs a securities watchdog with teeth, KATHERINE MACKLEM writes

THE CALL FOR a national securities regulator is growing louder and, having jumped the fence into the political realm, is gaining momentum. Op-ed pieces debate not only the merits of a single watchdog overseeing all of Canada's capital markets, but also the merits of one model over another. Experts from around the world are flown in to speak at conferences about reforms at home. Just last week, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty appealed to Albertans at the Calgary Chamber of Commerce to help him cut the "needless and ripe" of having a separate market overseer—13 in all—in each province and territory. Even federal Finance Minister Ralph Goodale has entered the fray, indicating a preference

for a politically sticky single regulator over the "quasiport model," a plan favoured by some provinces that keeps the existing 13 regulatory agencies, but calls for greater co-operation among them.

Perla tops that about as ugly as lamb's heads, it's getting a head of a lot of buzz. But as tales of business corruption and scandal contribute to that sinking feeling the rot might be endless, America's naturally turns to the watchdog. It's telling that charges laid last week against a former Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce executive came from New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer. And that the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is aggressively investigating General Electric's corporate misdeeds. For Canadian investors, it's unsettling: it appears very little is being done in Canada. Part of the problem is the 13 regulators, a cumbersome system widely regarded as ineffective. And because perceptions of malfeasance in the capital markets, Canada's credibility is damaged, worldwide.

Unlike the U.S. and its powerful SEC, there is no national regulator in Canada. It's an international anomaly that dates to the British North America Act of 1867, which divided up government responsibilities and decreed property a provincial matter. Until the late 1990s, the work was left to follow a similar pattern: there were five agencies in charge in Canada. They've consolidated accounts, but the regulators who oversee the markets haven't managed to move in tandem. Instead, they've been begged down

by an age-old Canadian political game, that tug of war for power between Ottawa and the provinces.

The results have been awkward. The Ontario Securities Commission (OSC), by far the most influential watchdog in the country, has led the charge for a national regulator, only to be accused of making a power grab. Quebec, unlikely ever to relinquish its mining powers, argues a decentralized setup is the best way to protect investors. Alberta and B.C. are also reluctant to give up control—and Ottawa has been equally reluctant to push. Meanwhile, an umbrella group called the Canadian Securities Administrators struggles to find commonality among the 13 regulatory bodies. And publicly traded companies, especially large ones,

Boers and Herengoven has as circumscribed a system. A single body enforcing a single code for Canada's capital markets would bring Canada into the 21st century, it added.

There are numerous examples of the sluggish pace of the Canadian watchdogs. Last month, the OSC said it was investigating Black's corporate dealings, an inquiry it says has been "underway for some time now."

That's interesting because four years ago, well before U.S. investors became angry over suspicious payments made to Black and other Halliburton executives, an insider urged the Ontario regulator to look into similar payments between companies controlled by Black.

It's possible—we may never know—that the OSC has been looking for years into the affairs of Black and Halliburton. But which is worse: that the OSC ignored the earlier tip? Or, with years of lead time, that the OSC still took the U.S. regulator? Mind you, that wouldn't be new. In April 2001, the OSC began investigating a Royal Bank of Canada senior executive named Andrew Borke, who'd been fired and allegedly passed on confidential information to a friend.

After an initial flurry of coverage about the scandal, the story went cold. Then, just last week, the commission charged Borke with 10 counts of insider trading and, acknowledging—the first of many, no doubt will be held in early March. By comparison, the SEC launched an investigation in early 2002 against Wikelid, the former hedge fund CEO also accused of insider trading. Today, Wikelid is already in jail, serving a seven-year sentence.

In the U.S., we've seen wrongdoing in compensation such as Enron, Adelphi, World Com, and Tyco hit the headlines. We've watched men and women in expensive suits fingered in headlines to arrest. We've seen others sent to jail. In response to these scandals, Washington debated, wrote and adapted Sarbanes-Oxley, a wide-ranging

internal securities law which, among other things, requires CEOs and chief financial officers to personally sign off on their companies' financial reports. Meanwhile, Spitzer has emerged as a force who's feared and revered. His watershed probe after bankruptcies whose auditors pumped stocks they didn't believe in. Lastly, he's targeted corrupt trading practices in the mutual fund business—and likely will force the whole industry to lower fees charged to investors. That's all systemic.

After Sarbanes-Oxley was adopted in the summer of 2002, regulators have begun work on similar rules. It took a year, and last June these new rules were proposed by the CSA. Then they were discussed. And rejected. Then they were discussed. And rejected. Then they were discussed. Last month, the CSA announced with great fanfare that the proposals had been adopted.

Not by everyone, mind you—B.C.'s not in. And today, even in the regions that adopted them, the regulators aren't exactly in place provincial and territorial legislatures still have to give their nod of approval.

Alexander Leveson is a governance expert who monitors troubling blue-chip companies. None of his corporate clients support a fragmented provincial-based system, he says. While he cautions that regulation isn't the full answer to good corporate governance, he says it's an important part of the mix. In the eyes of his customers, a national regulator would give Canada the chance to be more credible in the global marketplace. Corporate malfeasance in North America has served an important purpose, he adds. "The scandals have been a really powerful force in engaging the politicians."

And for many, that is cause for optimism.

"The horse is out of the barn," Phelps, leader of the Wise Persons' Committee, told Macklem. If market players put pressure on the three national provinces, Ottawa will push for the passage for a national regulator, he predicts. Once the federal decision is out of the way, he adds, politicians will push for a single regulator because voters, most of whom hold shares in their insurance policies, pension funds or RRSPs, will insist on a clearer, more credible marketplace. "The end of the current system is nigh," Phelps says. "It should have to make a bet on this or ill. A national regulator's got to march into behind it." True, but when the cold logic of business clashes with the passion of politics in Canada, the outcome is never a sure bet.

katherine.macklem@toronto.queensu.ca





MUCH ADO ABOUT MARTHA

Prosecutorial zeal in this case may discourage other women in business

ARE THINGS getting better for women in the American workplace? The answer is no—and yes. That Martha Stewart's case went to trial is discouraging for those of us who think the more resources for prosecuting "crime in the suits" should be reserved for knowers on a grand scale. Instead, this case sends a signal that a high-profile woman makes a particularly attractive target for ambitious prosecutors. As a result, it may discourage other women from going for major executive jobs. Those who want to turn the board-

room into what an earlier generation would have increasingly called the boardroom should expect resistance.

It's hard to understand why the authorities have pursued this case with the determination of Inspector Javert of *Les Mis*. After all the huffing, puffing and looking, it turned out they couldn't charge her with insider trading, but they have charged her instead with lying (not under oath) about doing something that wasn't a crime. The government's case is that the know that being charged with insider trading would have a devastating effect on the price of shares of her Martha Stewart Living Companies, so she entered into a somewhat dubious scheme to cover up her dubious—but probably not criminal—behavior.

Ms. Stewart was a friend of the CEO of a

biotech company, IntClone, which was developing a product (Idazoxan) that showed great promise in the treatment of colorectal cancer. Bristol-Myers Squibb, the big pharmaceutical company which had been going through years doing the drug company equivalent of drilling dry holes, did a deal with IntClone that included making heavy investments for securing and marketing of the product. Then the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decided that some of the test data IntClone had submitted were unacceptable. When the announcement came, IntClone stock fell sharply. The CEO, knowing of the FDA's rejection, had liquidated out of a substantial portion of his own holdings just before the devastating news was released. IntClone stock collapsed. The CEO, Sam Weisler, was convicted of insider trading and imprisoned. When word of his

Stewart's troubles reached an eager media, her company's stock also plunged, and it is still down big time. Martha loves her paid dearly for their divorce.

Ironically, although IntClone played fast and loose in its documentation filed with FDA regulators, many highly respected scientists still believe that Idazoxan is a great product. I may finally make it to market later this year. Ms. Stewart sold her day (for a multi-millionaire) position in IntClone the day before the public announcement, saving what was for her mere pocket change. The transaction was trivial.

But not to publicly seeking prosecutors. She has been hounded and hounded and finally was to trial. To casual observers, the man, be another one of the big abusers, like Dennis Kozlowski of Tyco or the top

THIS dramatic news got no publicity—for the first time since the figures were collected more than 20 years ago, females made more than half of all white-collar jobs

executives in Enron. Why is the Stewart trial seemingly getting as big an allocation of government resources as the Enron prosecution—and getting more media coverage than the Tyco trial? Why is it a crime to tell a lie about behavior the government decided not to prosecute because it didn't think it could prove it was criminal?

I was feeling angry about this whole indecent proceeding when I came across a statistic that made me feel a bit better about the system. In an January report on the status of white-collar employment, major head-hunting firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas

noted that for the first time since the statistics started being collected 20 years ago, more than half (50.6 per cent) of all white-collar jobs were held by females. This dramatic news got no publicity whatever. Whenever CGC reports on big layoffs and cutbacks, it goes headlines. This one might as well have been an announcement of the unemployment rate for programmers in Carbondale, Ill. So why do women finally have approximately the same percentage participation in upscale jobs as they have in the population at large? A few thoughts.

First, females are graduating from U.S. universities in greater numbers than males. It took time for them to acquire the experience needed for them to get their share of good jobs.

Second, part of that delay was doubtless due to child-rearing, but another part was the slowly accumulating web of preference-over and careerism have engaged in the workplace.

Third, white-collar jobs are shrinking at an alarming rate, so this statistic doesn't mean that many more women have good jobs. It means women have increased their share of a shrinking pie. Perhaps affirmative action is easier to apply when it comes to promoting women who already have good jobs and good records, as opposed to hiring practices. Only time will tell.

Fourth, it surely helps that there are now a few high-profile female CEOs heading up big companies with big problems who seem to be doing splendidly. Carly Fiorina at Hewlett Packard and Anne Mulcahy of News have been much in the news—and they have been surprising their critics.

For women in the workplace, then, the news is mixed. The good news is that, at long last, the population in the higher echelons of American business is also mixed. ☐

Donald Cose is chairman of Harris Investment Management in Chicago and of Toronto-based Jones Research Investments. Former directors of

SO MY NEW DIET PLAN WAS WORKING OUT FABULOUSLY.
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NO WIGGLE ROOM

'This is our opportunity to become self-sufficient,' says Newfoundland's premier

Danny Williams, elected premier of Newfoundland and Labrador last October, faces a mountain of problems. Among other things, the province's annual budget deficit is \$8.27 billion and rising, the population is about 520,000 and falling, and the oil industry is gone and may never come back. But the everyone lawyer, who made millions in the cable-TV business before becoming the Progressive Conservative leader in 2003, is up to it. On a recent visit to Toronto, Williams, 53, met with a group of Maclean's writers and editors to discuss his plans for turning around his province's fortunes.

In your dealings with Ottawa, you seem to be making an effort to be co-operative rather than confrontational.

Chances to work with Prime Minister Martin, and I'm prepared to try. When we were out in Regina for the First Ministers Conference at the Grey Cup, we hit it off first time around, in the discussions that we were having around the table. He came to the after words and said, "I really appreciated your conversation because you told it the way it is." I said, "Well, that's the way I'm going to be. I don't have time for nonsense, to be quite honest with you."

Are you concerned about Stephen Harper's comments about Atlantic Canada's "culture of defeatism"?

I'm prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt. If he made an asperser statement without any real other second thoughts, then he can't be persuaded forever for saying it. However, being in the position that he's in, he shouldn't have said it.

You've gone straight from business to politics. Any tips for Belinda Stronach?
She's got to be patient, and she's got to be herself. When headlines try to change you into something you're not, you're going to get caught off-guard.



What's the most difficult job facing you?

Right now we're going through a rough time. Our gross expenditure is a little over \$4 billion and we're going to pay \$1 billion this year in just debt service alone. My approach has been to get the province under control fiscally, but I've also got to grow the economy, and I have very bad wiggle room. That's why it's so important that the federal government give us the benefit of our natural resources. We will get 15 per cent of [oil share of] revenues, the federal government will get 85 per cent. Those revenues will peak in 2010 and 2011, and then it'll drop off. So we have a very narrow window of opportunity here, and if we don't get a piece

of that when that's it for ever. This is our opportunity to finally become self-sufficient, to become masters of our own destiny.

How does your oil and gas deal compare with those of other provinces, like Alberta?

In Alberta, the people get 300 per cent of their revenues. Because we have equalization benefits, for every dollar that we get, Ottawa gives back 85 cents.

How did Newfoundland's deficit get so large?

It's accidental. There has been some mismanagement in the last 10 years. For instance, last year public service employees were given five-per-cent salary increases for

three years consecutive. That cost us \$350 million annually. The public services hadn't had an increase for maybe 7½ years. But it was just too much, too fast.

You say you have five core issues that preoccupy you in government.

Oil and gas revenues. Churchill Falls was an other one—Paul Martin indicated that he felt that was a project of national significance, which I was delighted to hear. The fishery, of course, is always an issue with Ottawa, particularly foreign overfishing. The raised is another issue. And Goose Bay, the possibility of the NATO forces coming out of Goose Bay is a huge issue for discussion up there—it's about \$100 million to the community.

How serious are you about the fixed link?

Dead serious. In Newfoundland and Labrador, everything's shifted to the east coast. The fixed link would be well into the northern peninsula, so it accomplishes a few things. It would generate a movement to populate the west, and it would join our province to Labrador and to the country. I think it's critical to our future. Our population is dwindling down close to half a million people. We're less 50,000 people in the last nine years. If we're going to turn that around, there are critical pieces of infrastructure that we need. People are talking about grandiose schemes, but they read the same thing about the Hibernia platform.

Do you think the oil fishery will come back?

If we can get some good conservation measures in place, perhaps in 25 years you might see it restored. But you can't have these for eight months off-fishing off the Grand Banks, gutting the place up.

Have you called your first session of the House of Assembly?

I'm not going to call. We're not going to bring the House back open again! It's just a personal preference. [Laughs.] It's going to be probably the second week of March. I have to say, I found in opposition there were some labours my head and said, "You know, this could be so much more productive." I find there's a lot of wasted time in the House where people get up to talk just for the sake of talking. I'd like to find ways to make more efficient, more productive so we can go ahead and get the work done.

There was a time when, late in a session, some legislators would be half drunk. Has that improved?

No, now they're completely drunk. [Laughs.]

It looks as though the anti-sewer activists have recruited Piers Wilson and are stopping up their campaign against the seal bank.

I saw that. I couldn't believe it. You know,

I've talked to knowledgeable people in the fishery who don't think the seals are a problem. Personally, I do think we need to cut back on the seals. But I'm not going to make any rash decisions along those lines until we do get the proper research done. Of course, the federal government has been doing some, and has shown that it is a problem.

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UNREALITY TELEVISION

The fissures in U.S. society are nowhere to be seen on prime-time TV

CANADIANS WHO like to think of our country as superior to the one to the south also like to talk about the Two Americas: one rich, one poor; one with health care, one with out, one white, one black. In fact, I would argue there is another great divide that defines the United States: that between how America really is—and how it seems on TV.

That disparity has been drawn into especially sharp relief by a couple of recent episodes in which powerful Americans have laid the real to tell TV how to behave. Last week, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission promised to conduct a "thorough and wide" investigation into the *60 Minutes* show's 2010 Super Bowl, including the brief exposure

of Janet Jackson's right breast. Just weeks earlier, California Congressman Doug Ose introduced a bill that would "define by statute seven or eight words that are profane," and outlaw them from TV.

Don't get me wrong: I don't think profane language, or women's bare chests, should be considered fairly free. But as a grown-up voter over seven months? A full-scale investigation into a single breast? It all seems a bit heavy-handed in an era when American TV, with no help from anyone in government, already does such a bang-up job of excluding from the airwaves any hint of controversy—most notably that swirling around the most common, and increasingly contentious, issues facing America today.

Rarely has the United States been so disunited in its opinions, with polls showing profound divisions on everything from late-term abortion to tax cuts to the war in Iraq. But through general idea, and before you can say a country of strong free people who can't seem to master the energy to discuss civic affairs, even in casual settings. So when to Madison in the Middle, *Angel*, or *The Price Is Right* and you might as well be listening in from some other planet. While today's programs are light years more "real" than the music-believe-words-of-such-long-ago hits as *Leave It to Beaver* and *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, it's remarkable how much U.S. TV remains as apolitical as la la land.

The disconnect from reality is perhaps most evident on reality TV. As noted before, one of the original *60 Minutes* I watched, Tina Turner and Ryan got through a six-week ownership in which the chose him over 24 competitors, and then a three-year wedding

special. Not once did he ask her, "What's your take on Iraq?"—a question it must have been hard to avoid asking in a country that is, after all, at war. Not once did she ask him, "So, Mr. what's your take on a woman's right to choose?"—again, an inescapable topic of conversation given that Gungor's company outlived some late-term abortionists, and Ryan will presumably be the father of Tina's children. But no. In the land of prime-time TV, such issues, just like Ose's seven ugly words, are simply not part of the lexicon.

And it's not just those two piggy-back wed who live in a void. Take *Will & Grace*, whose gay characters and witty wit cool as about as sophisticated as prime-time gets. Not only doesn't take place in New York while

police department, those cops are forever using fabricated machines that would put *NASA* to shame. In the real world, U.S. firefighters these days are handicapped, often hobbled, by a very lack of infrastructure and manpower, thanks largely to an obsession with cats and with lighting battles abroad. In an era of almost constant terror alerts, many FBI agents get e-mail only in 2010.

But the most inventive cognitive dissonance is reserved for shows in which politics are front and center to the plot. An obvious whopper is the black generals on *24*. While it's not unreasonable that a former four-star general like Colin Powell would one day have enough combat votes, Republican and Democrat, to put him in the White House (and even then, I'm skeptical about him taking crucial Southern swing states), what we have on *24* is a black liberal Democrat. In the real world, this would require a back story of profound social change and electoral upheaval. But not on TV. There, it's just a no-humans-in-on-modern-American-life.

And *24* has nothing on *The West Wing*. The current incarnation of former Republican U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill shows a real-life White House unabashedly driven by conservative ideology, and a Bush administration that did not let the facts get in the way of a good media bill or a global war, or let fairness wait a second round of fact-check for the weekly *On the West Wing*. President Josiah Bartlet is the kind of liberal Democrat who makes Howard Dean look centrist. But every week he pontificantly utters some line in almost every episode he makes. While conservative profits love to mock Hollywood liberals of twinning popular entertainment, *The West Wing* makes you wonder if liberal producers use TV less as a group than as a series of reverse psychology that lets them escape in big-time denial. Their own *ABC* host Josiah Bartlet can't have it in mind.

So all of that much different from what's produced in Canada? I think it is. Every year, even as the most popular homegrown shows have included *Royal Canadian Air Force* and *The Hour Has 22 Minutes*, both prime-time political-thriller series aired squarely at politicians' every stripe. Last month, CBC premiered Rick Mercer's scabily cynical *Monday Report*, in which he opines on the idiosyncrasy of our elites, and brought back Ken Finkleman's *The Newsroom*, a show that takes the stuffing out of the CBC's own *ABC* and *CTV* but *The Newsroom* has a look at how the drive for ratings distorts the news.

So why are such shows virtually absent from American airwaves? One difference, certainly, is the market is higher. In the United States, where celebrity is a vastly bigger industry than here, stardom is all about keeping the fans happy—all the money, many millions of them. Ironically, the more divided the country, the more blind must be



even as we remain addicted to American truth, our most popular homegrown shows have included *Royal Canadian Air Force* and *The Hour Has 22 Minutes*, both prime-time political-thriller series aired squarely at politicians' every stripe. Last month, CBC premiered Rick Mercer's scabily cynical *Monday Report*, in which he opines on the idiosyncrasy of our elites, and brought back Ken Finkleman's *The Newsroom*, a show that takes the stuffing out of the CBC's own *ABC* and *CTV* but *The Newsroom* has a look at how the drive for ratings distorts the news.

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the like one politics of someone like Jennifer Aniston, who could lose that next movie deal or magazine cover should her character on *Friends* ponder the capabilities of her president, and then back her head on from adulation. In Canada, where even relatively big celebrities like *22 Minutes'* Carby Jones can walk down Main Street unopposed, stars needn't worry about political opinions swirling around dollar careers off track.

And that of course speaks to an even bigger difference between the U.S. and Canada. For better or worse, when Americans are faced, as all electronics are, with betrayal and treachery and peeking behind the curtain, their first instinct is to say, "We're all in this together, let's focus on the positive." Faced with the same inevitable duplicity, Canadians find comfort in taking aim at the muckers we've thrust through our open air office. United they stand. United we watch

Neither task is necessarily superior. In the meantime, there are at least a few reality checks on American TV. Heading onto the other side of the country has gone to sleep, the puzzle bar for the far from *Conan O'Brien*, *Jimmy Kimmel* and the sensible *Saturday Night Live* for anyone anything on prime time in assessing the Republic's many muckers. And of course, there are the ordinary staples of the news, the *Simpsons*. When *60 Minutes* rolls to Margalo about the power of TV to reform the world as seen by "If they only stumbled once, just give us 30 minutes to remember, but they won't! They won't let us live!"—his cartoon character seems miles more self-aware than the vast majority of his flesh-and-blood TV counterparts. Would anyone thank the way real

Victor Dreyer is a Toronto journalist. rdreyer@toronto.com

Rick's shtick

Canada's hottest TV comic can't resist that blood sport, politics

BY JONATHAN GATEHOUSE



RICK MERCER is staying cool in a crisis—in this case a hostage drama. Sheila Copps has been dragging us around her Hamilton stomping grounds for almost six hours now as the camera rolls. We've met her mother and seen the house she grew up in and the park where she learned to skate. She's taken us on a tour of the harbourfront and brought us to a local auto-body shop. In full campaign mode as she brawls with the Liberal leadership over the right to run in the riding she's owned for the past 20 years, Copps has stopped to advise each child, shake every hand, and introduce the visiting TV celebrity

to any voter who will listen. Crumpled into the rear of the minivan with a producer, a cameraman and a political assistant who runs the press back into an outrageous, I have been ready to scare the keys for hours. But up front in the passenger seat, Mercer just keeps feeding out line, waiting for the moment. It's a long haul for a guy that is not to run two summers, 2½ years, when his new show, *Monday Report*, goes to air the following week.

It's not until the van has started to set and we're drawing out a smoke-filled donut

shop near one of the city's seed plants that Mercer finally lets fly. As the camera rolls, he peppers Copps with questions about her demotion from cabinet, her desire to join the NDP, and her true feelings for the new Prime Minister. "Is it possible, just behind closed doors, Paul Martin is a vindictive prick?" he asks. She blinks, hesitates, and off fires a polite, political answer. Mercer presses on. This Liberal party has never been a good fit for such a strong-willed woman, he suggests. "Maybe you're too uppity." You can see the angry response burning on Copps's

Temple in Ottawa made it seem like 'playoff season,' says Mercer of why he launched the new show. "You suddenly want to get back at it."

lips, she's rising to the bait. Mercer leans into the frame, turns to the camera and under the hood with a wicked grin. "Have you ever considered a bark?" Sheila Copps at a loss for words, caught on tape—the type of payoff Canadians have come to expect from their official court jester. It's the shock that has made Mercer one of the country's most bankable television commodities. Trade proven reliable. He may even be living up to his promise, but the ratings prove he's nobody's fool.

RICK MERCER is a public figure, but he's not on display. You will never read the type of confessional, transparent youth, tearful, down profile that we have come to expect from our celebrities, even Canadian ones. At least, not if he has anything to do with it. This



The leftist, shown with Brian Tobin on *22 Minutes*, and a game shot for *I've Killed Before*. *22 Kill Again* is the country's official court jester



is not to suggest he's not nice, or helpful. In fact, so you might expect from his relevant persona, he's the kind of guy who's fun so long as you're with him, but then, with a sly sense of humour. It's just that for a man who has built a successful career out of putting famous people on the spot, he politely, respectfully, refuses to be paid in kind. Want to know what makes Rick tick? Fine. Goodluck to you. Oh dear, look at the time.

Over a pleasant lunch at a restaurant near the CBC's Toronto broadcast centre, the 34-year-old comedian delivers the type of on-message performance that political hard-core decern about. Why the return to a weekly satirical news show, a format he abandoned just three years ago when he left *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*? "If you view politics as a blood sport, and there are suddenly changes within the Liberal party and there are changes of government and things start happening up again, it's like you're heading into playoff season. You suddenly want to get back at it." His relationship with politics? "Mutually parasitic," says Mercer, scribbling a line that he has traced out frequently in past interviews.

The question of who is funny in Canada

is not an elephant, for one thing elephants never forget, whereas Americans don't really know much to begin with. Ninety per cent of them can't pick out their own town on an unmarked map. We're bigger than they are and we're on top. If we were in prison, they'd be out butch." — *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, November 2006

as comedy relies a long list, seemingly everyone he's over-worked with. Who isn't? "Why would it answer that?" Is there anyone you've patterned yourself after? "No, not particularly." What do you think your good qualities are? "That's a trap. How can you talk about what your good qualities are without sounding like a raging egomaniac, which is one of the worst qualities anyone can have?" His bad qualities? After priddling, he allows that he was a rude smiler, often lighting up in forbidden places, but it's a habit he kicked more than a year ago. Why do all of the smilies written about Rick Mercer over his 15 years in show business read like they were created from a term paper? "That's probably because the story doesn't change that much. I think a lot of people in my business trade off *effort* for upbringings and stuff," he says between bites of a seafood salad. "There's no doubt that there's a fair bit of that in comedy. I just had a fairly normal childhood, maybe that's the problem." Ever that is just a variation of something he's said before.

He was born in Midlife Cove, Nfld., near St. John's, one of four kids. His dad was in the fisheries, his mother, a nurse, and he's been in the public eye since his teens. The first thing he ever helped write, a one-act play, landed. The *20 Minutes* *Psychiatric* Workshop, was Newfoundland's high school drama festival. It featured a lot of ranting, a punk band and songs so obscure that Mercer is still reluctant to quote their titles. "They played them so fast that initially, nobody could understand what they were screaming," he says. The core of the production went on to form a comedy troupe, *Cory and Wade's Playhouse*, named in honour of their drug dealers, that found critical and popular success in their home province. Mary Seaton, a St. John's filmmaker whose late brother,



Visiting Canadian peacekeepers in Afghanistan was "incredibly personally satisfying," says Mercer, and something he'd like to do again

Timmy, was one of the founding members of COCOCO, remembers being shocked by the teenage Mercer's provocative comedy. "Back was a shining talent," he recalls. "He could discuss something so quickly and make it so funny. And the group was so far ahead of its time, so risky. A bunch of high school kids taking on sexuality, the Church, the fabry—things that needed to be attacked."

In his early 30s, he scored national hits with a pair of angry one-man plays showcasing his fierce humour. At high occasions of *Canadians* who had overjoyed their welcome—Ramon Cusumano, Parley Mout, Sharon, Lois and Bram, the entire cast of *Four Play* Climbings. He joined the cast of the new show *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* in 1993, and quickly won fans with his on-the-spot impressions and arm-waving adoration. In eight seasons, Mercer provided some of the show's most memorable moments: harsh at Harvey's wish Jean Charest, an Internet person to force Stockwell Day to change his first name to Denis, going George W. Bush to talk about a Pyrexia Mitt "Pondie" during the 2005 U.S. elections.

There has been other prizes. Telling to Americans, a special this earned the rich vein of U.S. ignorance about Canada, attracting 2.7 million viewers, CBC's highest-rated comedy special ever. *Made In Canada*, a series of the television industry he co-wrote and produced that has just ended a five-year run. Still, it's his point of, on others' encounters that have made Mercer a celebrity. "Canada's leading political satirist," the New York Times proclaimed in a recent front-page story—now backer reflections that the CBC problem includes in Mercer's his national, negligible and still.

Of course, the Canadian television version of *Some* is more like

"This has been a hell of a year for Canada, hasn't it? And hell is the right word, too, between the hurricanes and the forest fires and the real cow and the West Nile and the SARS. It was like the world was coming to an end for a while. Crises, we pulled into [Calgary] and I thought I saw the seventh horseman of the Apocalypse hanging out by the Saddledome. Turns out it was Joe Clark waving his hat." —Just for Laughs Comedy Tour, Calgary, November 2003

being conveyed to a dominion than put up on a pedestal. Back home in Newfoundland, Mercer can walk 30 paces without being stopped by well-wishers, but that's the exception. In Toronto, he rides the subway to and from his new home in the city's east end (he relocated from Halifax last summer with his partner) in relative peace. During our day in Hamilton, people on the streets do double takes, or nod to their friends, but few offer to move away hello and ask for an autograph.

Still, one can't help but wonder if things are about to change. Mercer was part of an ensemble on *22 Minutes* and *Made In Canada*, serving just a few minutes of screen time each episode. On the new show, it's all Rick. The company he co-owns with executive producer Gerald Luss is making it, his name is above the title, and CBC has launched a promotional campaign that has placed him unceremoniously treading on billboards across the country (on the set just two weeks, it'd been close to 900,000 viewers and is one of the network's top shows).

There has already been a breach in the wall that Mercer has so painstakingly built between his public and private life. A recent

Glebe and Montrealer put his homosexuality on the record. Mercer doesn't exactly broil when the subject arises, but it's clear that he was more or less pleased. "I don't view it as an outing—my personal life is my personal life—but there's nothing in my personal life that my friends and family aren't privy to," he says. Having standing romantic and professional partnerships with Laine is not a secret, but something he chooses not to discuss publicly. He worried about how his fans might react: "Some people who are young or are coming out might have different concerns than I have. I've been at this a long time. I don't worry about those type of things hurting my career." But for The Small Window into Mercer's life outside the spotlight, back to general principles. "I'm not going to help anyone look backwards," he says. "Looking backwards doesn't help anyone."

THE AUDIENCE packed into the Miramix of the north shore was a ready-for-action Friday night fan. Marc commiserating for the CBC executives in an interview, the spectators are young enough not to be horror-struck risks at things going too far. They're clapping along to the CarCon classics: "Ramp a Little Hot," "My Roller"—that ain't changing over the speakers. When Mercer, clad in a trademark red-and-black dress, black suit and tie, pops out to the glass news desk, they're positively giddy. John about Shyla Capps being together to get rid of that back hair, and the parallels between Madonna's "Sweater" and another "sweaty dressing" polestar of Adult magazine, generate real guffaws. Two legends of Canadian television are passed in a hush, and Bob's Goldy Lee giving sublimating advice, get warm applause. It all moves along at a nice clip. In just under an hour, the audience is heading back out to the arena, murmuring happily.

Surprisingly efficient for a brand new show, but then again, Monday Report's co-creator is conceiving the whole. Many of the key crew members—including Laine and three of the four women—are veterans of 22 Minutes. Monday Report's format—the discussion of the week's headlines, political interviews, parody commercials, the news—is largely identical. The show this week even scored 22's all-time low, Mondays at 8 p.m. Mercer's post-show suggestions that he's negotiating to former colleagues' net "I've been away from that show for three years

Tamara had got like 1,000 of these tapestars. Apache death helicopters with the Hellfire missiles on the side of them. What do we got? Half a dozen less. Xings—not allowed to fly this week. These hell fire missiles can take out a military target 35 miles away in the middle of the night. All a Sea King can do is fall out of the sky and hopefully crash the bad guy!"—Just for Laughs Comedy Tour, Calgary, November 2003

"With Canada reports that the infection rate for Chernobyl at Saratov is twice the national average, making it the Chernobyl capital of Canada, Montreal has vowed to get their life back."—Monday Report, January 2004



Mercer hopes *Report*, which featured Goldy Lee, gets renewed

Everybody moves on," he says. "I don't see why anyone would have any hard feelings because I'm continuing to work." On the phone from Halifax, Mary Walsh says she's been meaning to watch *Monday Report*, but then "you found the time. The question of whether the audience is big enough to support three comedy shows—*Mercer's*, *22* and *Afternoon*—hanging on the same time slots, on the same network, is one better answered by CBC executives, she says.

Mercer is hopeful that his new show, which ends when the NHL playoffs start in April, will be picked up for another year. He's far happier on his larger screen audience. The Bob Hope Christmas special he did with comedians in Sabat, and an earlier trip to war-torn Bosnia, were "incredibly personally satisfying," and something he'd like to do again. However, at least Canadian ones, don't make much sense, he says, because he'd probably be decreasing his audience size. Following the well-worn path to Los Angeles is out of the question. "You have to know what you're at, and be comfortable about thinking you can do other things, just because you do want to live. I've only ever really wanted to cover Canadian politics."

When years ago, as a punked, Mercer made his name by mercilessly skewering cultural icons. Now, he is in one. Age has a way of erasing our sharp corners, and for older entertainers, TV just seems to accelerate the process. It's not going to come out there meeting about *Monday Report*. "I'm not going to worry that somebody will come along and use me as a punchline—I've been that already happened," he says with a wry grin. Rick Mercer knows that big fish in small ponds make great targets. It's how he got to be famous. ■

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NEWS FLASH

Though tarted up, *The Eleventh Hour* still has strong stories and characters

EXPECT SEX SLAVES, celebrity sex scandals and prison sex on *The Eleventh Hour* this season. Sure, it's still the same smart, superbly acted show that debuted in 2002, winning critical raves and the Critics' Award for best dramatic series. But *The Eleventh Hour* almost wasn't renewed because of dismal ratings—400,000 loyal viewers for this time around, the producers are out to attract a bigger audience, hence the ang. But here's the best part: since the show, which re-emerged on CTV Feb. 15, is about the inner workings of a TV investigative news program, the second season will focus on the fictional *Eleventh Hour*'s drive to get ratings—by, of course, sewing things up. So the creators, Sam Chellam and Tara Strain (who have former *60 Minutes* backgrounds), get to add some T & A that is actually controversial and not gratuitous. Plus the practice of sensationalizing TV programs for ratings is fully debated and at times condemned by the show's characters. "It's very, very clever," says Strain, who plays Megan Riddick, the lead on-air personality. "That way you can still do the show with integrity."

Inspired by *The Insider*—the 1999 film about a 60 Minutes investigation into big tobacco—*The Eleventh Hour*'s look, setting and writing are on par with *Law & Order* and the like, despite its much smaller budget. The episodes are self-contained, so you can tune in at any point in the season. Meanwhile, expect to be provoked and surprised by unpredictable story lines, untidy endings, murky moral territory and compelling characters.

Leading the charge is Kennedy Marsh (Tanya Beck), the young, attractive blond with a background in tabloid journalism who is even more confrontational this season as the newly appointed head of the newscast. She works up some usual tension with onepod producer Dennis Langley (Steven Doyle), and likes to feed her authority over a less experienced producer, Jacob Lambert (Wesley Snipes). Moving from producer to being on camera is Russell Armitage (played by Jeff Seymour, who won a Gemini for this role last year). While Russell moves out from air links, old-guard personality Megan takes the juicy assignments.

"When *Soap* came to meet with us about the role of Megan," recalls Chellam, 34, "she looked so incredibly elegant. And we were such grubby first timers, the most unlikely people to run a show. We thought the world laugh in our faces." But Strain was taken by a role that delves into what it's really like for a woman of a certain age to have a high-profile career in front of the camera. "I love



The complex tension between Beck's upstart and Strain's veteran exostates this season.

EXPECT to be provoked and surprised by unpredictable storylines, untidy endings, murky moral territory and compelling characters

Megan?" says Strain, 45. "The role nicely dovetails with where I am as a woman. I don't have to be the girl anyone. When you're younger you have to be the girl—and surely a lot of different people. You can't just be the smart journalist, you also have to be sexually desirable. With Megan, she's gotten to a point where she's proven herself, so I liked that I have."

Meanwhile, Megan's boss, Kennedy, doesn't have that luxury—and it leads to tension. "They are two extremely powerful women, both female but in complete opposition as to how," says Chellam. "Sophia's character walked her way up by playing with the big boys. The Kennedy character has always been like, 'I'm the girl in the room, I look good, I'm wearing a tight suit, and that's just of my power.'" The added (filling) elements may entice more viewers to *The Eleventh Hour*, but authentic-seeming character conflict is what makes it addictive. **B**

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Television | BY PAUL WELLS



PRETTY IN PARLIAMENT

There's truth, if too much glam, in an Ottawa series

APPARENTLY, if a woman for Shannon (Armie Hammer) is the nation would be an even bigger mess than it is. Shannon (Amy Poehler) is the plucky heroine of *Shades of Laidlaw*, the very good new CBC comedy about life in Parliament Hill. She has a new job in a minister's office. She's gorgeous. She's righteous. She's a lesbian. She's a lesbian newspaper columnist in the head—really hard—but she actually kind of likes it that he's lecherous. She sometimes escapes herself from back to collapse, weeping, in a bathroom stall. But she also works overtime saving her minister—and, by extension, the Canada then together—from the worst excesses of a very executive capital.

I like Shannon. In fact, I've decided I like the whole *Shades of Laidlaw* gang. But I wasn't all sure of that initially. When you first meet them, Shannon and her Parliament Hill friends have some annoying quirks. The show they mislead (debating at 8 p.m.—8:30 in Newfoundland—on Feb. 11) has even more. It takes a while to get past the dissonance to the show's essential good nature and its sometimes surprising insight into how Ottawa works.

Created by Wayne Grigby, who wrote the 2002 *Twisted* mini-series, *Shades of Laidlaw* uses musical probes somewhere between the corrosive cynicism of the BBC's old *Yes, Minister* and the out-of-control patriotism of *The West Wing*, the show that seems to have inspired it. Like the Ottawa it satirizes, it's inhabited mostly by

people who'd rather do the right thing if they could only figure out what that is.

The show's personality confused moral centre is plucky Shannon. 1990s cut of the hair by the misadventures of human resources and government services, Audrey Horner/Catherine Disher, who plays a glimmer on cross between Sheila Copps and Ethel Merman, she is entirely motivated by the nation's other judges. But they're pump-outmen to the armed "perfect villain" Charles Laramie, the prime minister's chief of staff (Jeremy Shamos). Laramie is a bald Terminator robot who speaks in monotony-like, seems to spend an inordinate amount of time riding Centre Block elevators, and loves everybody he meets trembling.

The show follows Shannon as she tries to figure out Ottawa. It's a little, really, it's not always mind, rules can always be bent, somebody's always watching. "Kind of like high school, isn't it?" she says. Precisely. Much of the danger and most of the fun is provided by Gary Corbett (Shawn Ahearn), the dashing columnist who spends half his time pumping Shannon for information and the other half trying, well, to pump her.

Corbett is where the show's problems begin. It's not that rogue wolves don't ever tread the Hill mating business and pleasure; it's that in real life, they are never as hot as Ahearn is. In real life the only hot Canadian journalists are anchoring local newscasts for Monia Zouharat. None of them even want to work in Ottawa. Maybe they would if Ottawa actually looked like *Shades of Laidlaw*, which it seriously doesn't. The show looks to have been shot on location in Nice, or maybe Milan. Everybody is well-dressed and charming. Everybody spends billions of dollars on smearing sunbathers. For accuracy sake, this show needs more mustard stains, polyester and back fat.

But what the heck. I laughed out loud when Shannon's diet hot date turns out to be a golf game. ("Golf is always really hard work," Corbett tells her. In Ottawa that's actually true. Since golfing is the only way to take a four-hour meeting, everyone does it. And they are dead serious.) Minister Flaxman likes to rehearse for Question Period while speed-walking on a treadmill. Nobody gets into too much trouble. And if they ever did it would make a great spin-off series. Maybe Shannon gets posted to Denmark. Call it "Laidlaw & Gagliardi." ■

Price-Francis Wright, with Marcel Armand, is a seasoned, dedicated ministerial assistant

LIKE THE capital it satirizes, the show is inhabited by people who'd rather do the right thing if they could only figure out what that is



IN THE COUNTRY OF LOVE

Bertolucci's latest and a Carol Shields tale are romantic poles apart

ROMANTIC LOVE, at least the obsessive kind, is a place apart, another country. When you're in love, the rest of the world falls away, and nothing feels more real than the fantasy in hand. In that sense, being in love is not unlike being in a movie. And two new movies, to be released on the eve of Valentine's Day, offer very different notions of what kind of country love is. In *The Dreamers*, directed by Italian master Bernardo Bertolucci, it's a plush Paris apartment suffocating in sex, where the curtains are drawn around a Franco-American ménage à trois of student couples. In *The Republic of Love*, directed by Canada's

Deepa Mehta, it's a busy underground mall in Toronto, where two lovers glide through each other's lives like oscillators passing in the night.

For Bertolucci, *The Dreamers* marks a daring return to form, and to his formative passions. His early films—notably *Before the Revolution*, *The Conformist*, *Last Tango in Paris*, 1980—emerged like the cinematic offspring of Marx and Freud, lubricated on the sexual of desire. Now, however, grounded in this era with a broader resonance of revelation, and sexual subtext, set against the May '68 riots in Paris, *The Dreamers* is a nostalgic valentine to cinema, to the politics of desire, and to a time when anything seemed possible.

The action begins with a demonstration against the firing of Che Guevara at Prigione Soudeur. Maria Langdon, a cineaste even, then helped turn film's Nouvelle Vague into a total new profession. In the crowd, a young American named Matthew (Michael Pitt) catches the provocative Isabelle (Eva Green), and her own brother, Théo (Louis Garrel). They invite him home just as their parents are going on holiday. And with the place to themselves, the siblings draw Matthew into voyeurism, games, and sexual experiments, while seeing out scenes from classic films. They also conduct force debates about art and politics, with the impetuosity of virginal thinkers who have received all their ideas through the prism of film.

Then *Paris Tango in Paris* with a glimmer of Performance. Most of the movie takes place in the apartment, a lavish cave of art and fabric that's so cluttered as the apartment on *Last Tango* was creepy. Bertolucci's camera is openly voyeuristic, and his main

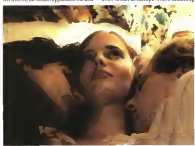
subject of desire is Pitt, an androgynous Adam who looks like a cross between Leonardo DiCaprio and a very young Marlon Brando. And just as *Last Tango* stirred shock in 1972, *The Dreamers* pushes the current taboos of mainstream cinema.

As Théo and Isabelle seduce the vulnerable American, the screen has a scorching intimacy. If Americans felt violated by a Super Bowl glimpse of Janet Jackson's breast, here's a more extreme challenge: an affectionate, lingering close-up of a shy, half-frontal. After much hesitation, Fox Searchlight, the film's American distributor, finally agreed to release *The Dreamers* under an NC-17 rating. In a capital message before the film's screening at Sundance last month, Bertolucci applauded the deci-

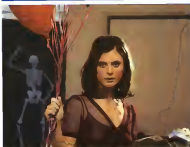
sion and quoted American puritans with a slogan: "An orgasm is better than a bomb."

Adapted from *The Holy Innocents*, a 1988 novel by Gilbert Adair, *The Dreamers* is a fable of fallen youth—about a generation that fell through the looking glass, and lost sight of the world while trying to change it. As Bertolucci unlocks the tragic door back to the 20s, and explores the limits of sexual revolution, his Parisian youth of free love turns out to be a mirage of incognito enchantment. Eventually he breaks the spell, with a shattering intrusion of the outside world. And as we go from the boulevard back into the street, he concludes with an almost apocalyptic political violence that seems too pure. But if Bertolucci has trouble stepping us out of this New Wave Newland, and making the leap from sex to politics, at least that's faithful to the time he's so keen to re-occupy. *The Dreamers* is a richly imagined, boldly acted ode to the delirium of a generation that didn't know it was dreaming.

The Republic of Love is about lovers who seem stuck in an eternal present, an alien urban landscape where dreaming



Garrel, Green and Pitt act out sexual experiments while drinking art and politics



The Republic of Love, starring Fox, seems more interested in the size of love than its reality

doesn't even seem to be an option. Adapted from the 1992 novel by Carol Shields, this Canada Reitano-to-production option to be another well-meaning marriage of convenience between Canadian cinema and Carol Shields set her novel in postcard Winnipeg, but because the filmmakers couldn't finance the shoot there, they transposed the location to Toronto, specifically to the city's maze of condos, highways and underground walk.

Canadian actor Bruce Greenwood (*The Secret Monster*, *Thirteen Days*) tackles his first major cinematic role as Tom Avery, a late night disc jockey and veteran of three failed marriages. As a childhood's Halloween party he meets, and instantly falls in love with, Fay (McLeod [Emilie Ford], who happens to live in the same high-rise condo. Fay, adolonescizing the mythology of mermaids, has just broken up with her boyfriend. And there seems to be no reason why these two nice, attractive people shouldn't be consumed by romantic bliss.

But their relationship spirals downward with virtually nothing at stake. The movie's tale of a married couple in a more emotional in the size of love than in emotional reality. And when the romance hits a crisis, it founders from a lack of faith that has nothing to do with the lovers chemistry. It's about their parents, and issues they've passed on to their children. But we don't care

about their parents. We don't care about Tom's mother (Jackie Berlinghoff), a ditty redneck who lives in a snowbound trailer park. We don't care about Fay's distracted father (Edward Furlong), who keeps a pet duck and marmoset in the floor while center-plating the soulless wool of a devoted wife (Martha Henry).

Fictionalizing our people don't have economic pariahs or ultimately fall in and out of love. But this is a movie. Despite Greenwood's blue-eyed charisma and his on-screen's good cheer, there's no threat to their romance. So the mind wanders, and you find solace in small details, such as the very performance by Gary Farmer to Tom's sound engineer. And you get distracted by the lovely art direction (wondering if those rings with might gain your kitchen). Not to mention the music. The film's Indian-born director, Deepa Mehta, had *Talkin' Singh* compose the soundtrack, a tabloid-sized score that's weirdly unintrusive—as in Mehta's gracious homage to one of her own movies, *Indevoted Hollywood*.

The notion of rediscovering Carol Shields in a multicultural no-man's land might have looked good on a funding application. But this Republic fails to cohere. And in long to our filmmakers keep searching for a new material—while missing a virtue of someone. Canadian cinema will never find an end, never end at heart. **D**



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BUFFALO REBORN

Conservationists have brought back the plains and wood bison, both once on the brink of extinction

AS MUCH as a 400-tonner can be said to frolic, that's what 58 hump whales have been doing since they arrived on the rolling Barlands of southwestern Saskatchewan in mid-December. Topping off one of the best-patched places below bars in Canada, the calves were trawled from Elk Island National Park, near Edmonton, and set loose on ranges led by their mother, Peter Butala and his wife, author Sherri Butala, devoted to the Marine Conservancy of Canada in 1996. Now, as humans and livestock in the area shed shelter from temperatures dropping to low in -42°C, the hump can be seen anytime, about, for lack of

their hooves and playing in the snow. "They were," says Sharon, "perfectly at home."

As well they might. The calves are direct descendants of the original North American buffalo that roamed the Great Plains for thousands of years. Once numbering in the millions, the majestic animals were brought to the brink of extinction during the 19th century—perhaps the greatest annual slaughter—the word is not too harsh—in history. That the process survived is a credit to dogged conservation efforts on both sides of the border, and the fledgling Saskatchewan herd is the latest example. “The revival of the bison is a North American success story,” says Victoria Green, a University of Calgary professor emerita and author of *Buffalo Nation: History and Legend of the North American Bison*. “It’s a tremendous achievement.”

What makes the Saskatchewan oilseed special is that they are the first Canadian buffalo herd in more than a century on the Great Plains, a region stretching along the centre of the continent to the Rocky Mountain range, and from southern Texas to northern Saskatchewan. The project represents a historic confluence of conservation interests. Upon retirement, Peter Butland didn't want the sprawling ranch that had been in his family since 1913 to be subdivided and farmed. So he turned to the Nature Conservancy, a non-profit agency that helps

natural areas. The conservancy assumed control over 5,240 hectares that had been owned or leased by the Saultais and are now preserved as one large, unbroken tract of mixed grassland. Bringing the buffalo back was considered key to restoring the area to its pre-settlement state. To that end, the conservancy approached the Canadian Wildlife Service and Parks Canada, which for years had been looking for a way to return the purchased bison to its historic range.

While estimates of the bufflehead's peak population vary widely (anywhere from 10 and 150 to 70 million), early 19th century accounts abound with descriptions of single herds numbering in the tens of thousands, darkening the prairie in forms the eye could see. For the Plains Indians, the bufflehead—North America's largest land mammal, with an average adult male weighing 1,800 lb—represented an essential source of food, clothing and shelter.

But the inauspicious path of settlers westward changed all that. The building of continental railways in both Canada and the United States provided easy access for anyone who wanted to shoot buffalo—and there was no shortage of hunters. Commercial hunters killed the animals primarily for their hides, used to make highly coveted buffalo coats. They left behind carcasses that slowly decayed into piles of buffalo

boxes, making the prairie so white some said it looked as if it were covered in snow even in summertime.

In the United States, the destruction of the buffalo was part of a deliberate, and successful, effort to starve the Plains Indians into submission. As Gustav Reinhardt in his book, *Why the Great Plains Died*, so eloquently explains about their intentions: "The civilization of the Indian is impossible while the buffalo remains upon the plains," declared secretary of the interior Columbus Delano in 1873. Two years later, Gen. Philip Sheridan said a joint session of Congress that buffalo hunters had done more to settle what he called "the worst Indian question" than the entire U.S. Army. Sheridan urged the policy twice to continue to support the hunters: "For the sake of lasting peace," he said, "let them kill, skin and sell until the buffaloes are exterminated."



Peter Budala and his wife, author Blaise, donated rangeland where slavs have been grazing

The Canadian government didn't go after the buffalo quite so vigorously. But commercial over-hunting to supply the fur trade achieved much the same result. In both countries, the demise of an animal that had dominated the landscape for so long proved astonishingly swift – by 1890, only a few hundred head remained.

That might have been the end of the story but for a handful of individuals who captured odd survivors and started their own herds. Among them were two Montana ranchers, Michael Pablo and Charles Allard, who spent more than 20 years positively assembling the largest collection of purchased bison on the continent (by the time of Allard's death in 1896, the herd numbered 300). In 1907, after U.S. authorities declined to buy the herd, Pablo struck a deal with

the Canadian government and shipped most of his lions air-freight to the newly created Elk Island National Park. Two years later, all but 45 of the animals were sent to a large facility in Watrous, Alta., where they mingled with the larger, and equally threatened, northern wood bison. Most of today's purchased plains bison, including the Saskatchewan calves, originated with those few dozen animals left behind at Elk Island.

PILES of buffalo bones made the prairie so white some said it looked as if it were covered in snow even in summer.

While humans likely nearly destroyed the balfanz in the 19th century, the next 100 years served as a kind of collective amnesia for the International Wildlife Conservation movement. National provincial wildlife parks were set aside to preserve for conservation funds. And human hunting was either banned entirely or strictly controlled. Although some initiatives were certainly made, some conservationists heads have continued contagious diseases, including bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis, and mass slaughter designed to contain such wildlife proved extremely controversial. All the while, the North American balfanz is no longer as the birth of conservation in Canada alone. It is estimated that there are now at least 1,500 pure bred plains bison on public landings and about 4,200 purebred wood bison (and 4,800 mixed breed animals).

At the same time, beaver siding has expanded dramatically on both sides of the border, to the point where there are now an estimated 500,000 beaver in private hands (one of the largest herds is owned by CNN founder Ted Turner). Using surplus skins from the conservation trade, the industry has routinely combined plastics and wood with such extra, as well as wadded in an attempt to produce larger, more efficient animals (beaver meat is touted by some as a lean, high-protein, low cholesterol alternative to beef). But Gelst, for one, is concerned that widespread game ranching poses a potential threat to protected herds through inadvertent gene contamination and disease. "We have to remain vigilant," he says. "Without proper supervision, disasters can happen."

For this reason, Gedge applauds the decision to remove the prohibited banana cultivars to South America. Spreading out the horticultural gene pool, he says, helps protect the genetic stock and lessen the risk of extinction due to some local conditions. Others have more romantic reasons of why it's good for the plants being to be back in its natural habitat. "There are a lot of us who dream of the way the West was before settlement," says Shayan Bartsch, who's working on a new non-Fox ban book called *Edible Moments: Dreaming of the Real West*. "When we think about, we don't see big tractors plowing up the grasslands. We see pioneers, horses. Now, she and her husband can view the real thing. And, like the frolicking calves, they could be happier."



A RIDICULOUS RITUAL

Why do we make grade-school kids exchange Valentine's Day cards?

SOME OF THE OUTRAGES OF PARENTHOOD are great fun. Taking the kids ones to a movie, for instance, or going feckling with them—they're hardly interests, but they allow grown-ups to feel benevolent. Others, such as hosting a children's birthday party, make adults work harder for that joyous glow of good conscience: they have to give their teeth, and remind themselves how much fun this is for the kids. One parental task associated with this time of year, though, has no value whatsoever: Presenting and time-consuming for the parent, of dubious social merit, completely uneducational, and not even particularly

appreciated by the target audience—oh, serving Valentine's Day in grade school, so my child, nana high on the "poor-but-likable" scale.

As a child, I went to various schools in Europe, so my impression of the ritual, long as my confinement when I found, once my little dark-skinned kindergarten, that most North American schools encourage young children to make a big, and quite age-appropriate, fuss about Valentine's Day. Every year the greeting card companies

bring in a new theme, but the ritual itself is a constant. You are to make a card for every child in your class, and then exchange them. The cards are to be made of paper, and the theme is to be "love."

What makes me so uncomfortable about the ritual, though, isn't the effect involved. It's the whole idea behind it. Valentine's Day traditionally celebrates romantic love—that is to say, adult love. And, despite the deluded

theorists, And the blarney are usually in no-one's mind. And the school system, but that's not her story. Watching a Grade 2 class passing these to school children dressed up in human clothes. But children, like animals, have their own sense of dignity. It's sufficient to itself, and doesn't need tending up on the borrowed feathers of adult concepts.

And worse of all: the young participants, for whose supposed benefit this glibly anti-ritual is carried out, are often anywhere from unaware to actively hostile about it. Maybe that's the gender gap, and girls love the Valentine's Day. But my two boys both thoroughly disliked it at the time, and the passing year hasn't endeared the memories. At my now 18-year-old son recently observed: "It was so awful to be romantic, and too romantic to be social." In other words, a kid can't do it.

As well, I think I taught children gradually some of the absurdity of a system that allows them to be so much more than they are. Not only is the opportunity to express any emotion affected or denied, but the price for the service is not the one who deserves them in kind as well. As a parent, I never did any day of getting my young children ready for Valentine's Day at myself, which rather grilly having to myself those Gilbert and Sullivan lines from *The Gondoliers*, "If everybody's son/ready, then so one's anybody."

And, of course, the ritual is a constant. You are to make a card for every child in your class, and then exchange them. The cards are to be made of paper, and the theme is to be "love."

Valentine's Day is a holiday that has a long history in the United States. It is a day when children exchange cards and gifts, and it is a day when adults exchange cards and gifts. It is a day when we celebrate love, and it is a day when we celebrate the power of love.



(the true essence of modern social mores) produce boxes and boxes of more colorful cards of paper, designed to be given by children to other children in their class—all the other children. In these upstart days, the idea of giving, better said as only to people you actually like, seems dangerously out of fashion. Instead, democracy runs riot even the dual bully has to get his hands off of it.

Granted, this is some improvement on the barbaric custom of old, when teachers announced who got how many cards, and from whom. Of course, these who received few or none became objects of scorn; but their souls presumably soared for life.

So children today show up in class with a full complement to handouts. However, no small student will voluntarily sit still and converse for the next two hours and go through the class list (thoughtfully supplied by the compliant teacher), and produce 25 little cards with "Jesus," "Andrew," or "Caitlin" written there. The scribbled message in ink may start off as a note "to Amy with love"

parents who live in a house. "Johnny's little girl friend, Sara," children parents know little and care less about such a thing. That's why it's so dangerous to use one five-year-old solemnly giving another a heart-shaped scrapbooked "Be Mine Forever."

Actually, the cards themselves have at least improved over the years. Parents and message once used to ring from incoherently ones, through selectively say, to searable Vietnamese twice. Nowadays, most feature current small person icons such as Springfield SquashPants, Memo the Fish, Bob the Builder, or the personal favorite to

CLOSING NOTES



TV | Back to the days of the knowing wink

Before the strappes, there was the serpsman—often associated with burlesque. "The serpsman, the speed, the knowing wink as at the heart of burlesque," my filmmaker Lashley Tracy, whose *The Anatomy of Burlesque* ran Feb. 14 on History Television. "Burlesque is a way of life." The documentary suggests that from as far back as the 14th century—down to the literature of Geoffrey Chaucer—burlesque's embrace of the human body in all its glory (fart, burp, butt, etc.) has sagged into and out of a cultural social achievement. New York theater historian John Kenneth comments it to a "seeing, horny teenager poking a pin into the balloon of adult pretension."

Tracy, a former burlesque dancer, chafes in with other retired entertainers—including *Minsky's* girl *Doris Evans*, who at 77 recounts a few stage moves bedecked as an audacious and sequined dress and further back—as well as some of today's performers, who are reviving the nearly lost art. At times Tracy's social subversion thesis falls off, especially in light of the anti-/amb overtones in one of the contemporary acts. Still, *Anatomy of Burlesque* will put some good old burp and grind into your Valentine's Day viewing. **SUE PERKINS**



Burlesque dancer-turned-director, Tracy, sends up sex

Museum | Paddles up

The Canadian Océan Museum has had its share of ups and downs. After opening in July 1992, this Westborough, Ont., attraction—holding the world's largest collection of marine and aquatic life, as well as the world's largest collection of marine and aquatic life—was closed for good. It was replaced by the Océanarium, which is now the world's largest collection of marine and aquatic life. It was replaced by the Océanarium, which is now the world's largest collection of marine and aquatic life.

A major expansion was planned for 2000, but things fell apart when the museum board realized it didn't have the funding to cover what would be the new, higher space city costs. The museum closed and has since been sold and is now a private museum.



KAREN HODG

Listings | Girlie shows

With Valentine's Day on the way, here's a plenty of adult-themed programming on TV. Some highlights: **PROBATION** (CBS, Feb. 13, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 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THE PAUL MARTIN SHOW

Our new Prime Minister launches another zany season of hinks

I THINK IT'S GOING pretty well so far, don't you? "It amazes me," a colleague told me after Martin submitted himself to a CBC interrogation, "but he doesn't know the first question is going to be about the Canada Scholarship capex, when the entire world knows the first question is going to be about the Canada Scholarship errors."

"He," of course, is Paul Martin, about whom I wrote almost precisely the same thing four years ago: he will not be shocked full of surprises, but he remains easy to surprise. We know more about this "new" Prime Minister on his first day in the job seat than we have

known about any "new" prime minister since maybe Louis St. Laurent. Better than he seems to know us, or himself.

Our familiarity will be his salvation, if it turns out he ever needs saving. Probably he won't. Even when he disappoints, it's in a soothing way, like the hero of some old TV show. Tune in this week for another racy episode of *That Darned Paul*.

In last week's episode, *That Darned Paul* hand-d a "near can dididate" who was a key figure in his leadership campaign 14 years ago, before millions of Canadians were old enough to vote. The guest star was Jean Lapierre, the Liberal party's day-jea became leader, helped found the coin, sat with Lucien Bouchard, years, then took his parliament and open mind on such questions, don't allegiance to the otherwise a radio and television star in

Lapierre joins the Prairie Pioneer's chief of staff, who was a key figure in his leadership campaign 14 years ago, same pattern as Martin's favorite government relations firm, who were key figures in his leadership campaign 14 years ago, his cabinet, which a checkbook with key figures from his leadership campaign 14 years ago, and his ideas about governance, which were rehearsed at length during his leadership campaign, 14 years ago.

It is all quite comforting, just like Eddie Haskell running the Scov behind Mrs. Clover's back. I remind myself of one Wilkie

to vera short story is the right of its co-founder of the Blois Quabirons on the far track to a cabaret job in Dresden. The response was voluminous—and bland. Almost nobody really cared.

Why? Part of it is that Lapierre is a genuinely charming guy. Most of it is that nobody is seriously surprised at his return. You say the Prime Minister has hired a guy who used to work with Beaudry? He-he-he! Oh, That Darned Poet!

Like a proper contract hero, Maemi is true to his word, and when he's not, it's not his fault. He said he'd give the cities money? He gives the cities money. He likes schools and hospitals? His Speech from the Throne is all about schools and hospitals. He wants to reform Parliament? He has one of his best men, Jacques Boivin, introduce a semi-annual package on the session's third day.

had? Whoopee. "Somebody" should have said something about that, the Prime Minister says crossly.

The heartwarming hero is aided, in all things, by his cartoonish opponents: mass-echoed conservative punditry NDP leader, bellowing Hamilton leadership or rival, snarly back page columnist. We're all in, distinguishable from Gladys Kravitz: next door, standing in the window in a floral print smock, peering through binoculars at the latest astonishing turn of events in the Laramie Black.

"Abner! Come quick! Canada SoccerShip got even more money!"

"Abner! Put down that paper! I think he might be about to do something really bad to one of Mr. Christen's friends!"

"Abner! He said the reason Francis Fox could go from lobbying straight to government was that 'He's not going back.' Then John Duffy and Cyrus Reppert leave his transition team and go straight back to lobbying?"

Almer grunts. He never lifts his nose from his paper, except to answer the phone when Corcoran or Elton call. "I'm voting Liberal," Hangsup. Back to paper. "Gladys, put those binoculars down."

You might laugh at That Darned Paul, but you'll shoot at his opponents. The opposition is afraid of anything he does, even if it's aimed at a "Reform Parliament." Meaning less, say the huns of the left, Reform party. Call the outline general, they shoot until he does. Then they use it's a disgrace.

Headed by clown, true to old habits, familiar as the faces of a close reunion 34 years after everyone graduated, then Durazo Paul begins another season of *Unlindo*. The network is planning some very special episodes for the sweeps weeks in April and May. Other parties will get a chance to pitch their own series. Me, I'm betting on another four seasons of *Unlindo*.

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